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EMPATHY REVISITED

by

Michael de la Mothe BA MSc

Submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy
in the discipline of Psychology, 1985

Abstract

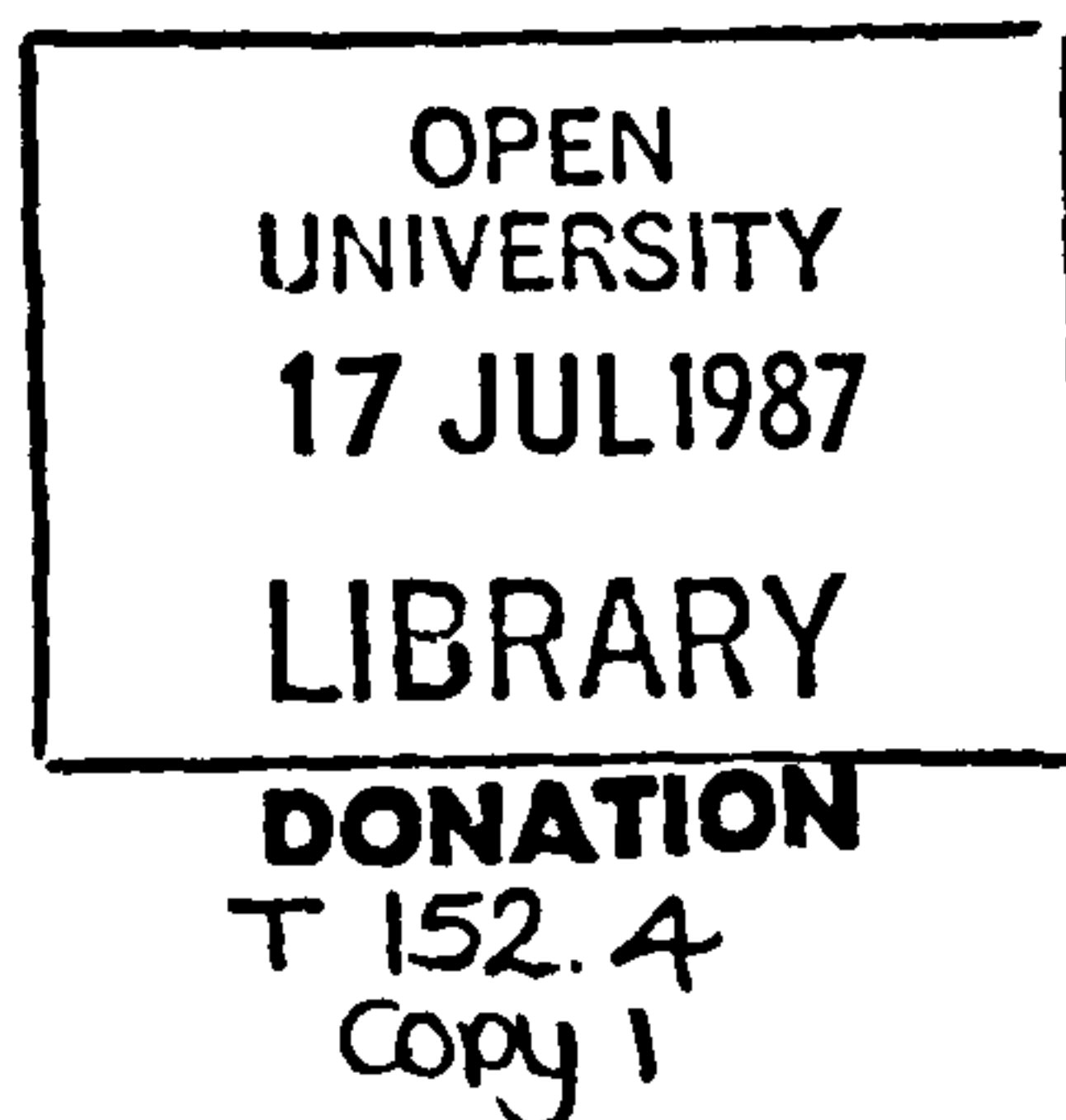
Empathy is presented as a relation between persons and by analogy between persons and non-human entities in which case it is called quasi-empathy. The characteristics of empathy, the sufficient and necessary conditions for its creation and nurturance, and various types of empathy, both authentic and mistaken, are examined. The role of empathy in various types of knowing especially personal knowing are discussed leading to an attempt to classify interpersonal relations. In the course of this analysis different ways of construing human beings are presented and contrasted with particular interest in the extent to which empathy, quasi-empathy and other relations are involved. A variety of emotional bonds which have some bearing on or similarity to empathy are compared with empathy. The dissertation concludes with a review of a selection from the empathy literature in which contrasts are made with the outline theory of empathy developed in this dissertation.

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I dedicate this work to my wife, Jean, and to the memory of Professor Brian Lewis. Without their unstinting help, good counsel and patient encouragement this work would never have reached fulfilment.



I gladly offer my thanks to my work colleagues especially the the college librarians for their help in securing essential reading and other materials; the staff of the research and development unit for their assistance and instruction in word processing, and the administrative staff who helped with innumerable secretarial services.

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PROLOGUE

Reading the literature on empathy can prove to be a disappointing experience. Few psychologists appear to have thought it necessary to probe the phenomenon they were investigating preferring perhaps the excitement of empirical research. Unfortunately this practice has left our understanding of "empathy" in a rather unsatisfactory state since, as I shall try to show in Chapter 3, there is little agreement about what "empathy" refers to, how it comes into existence and develops over time, indeed how best to conceptualise empathy at all. I shall here concentrate on two consequences of this neglect. The first of these is reification.

Reification and naming

The human sciences are replete with abstract nouns: class, role, intelligence, attitude, personality, creativity, motivation, rights, empathy . . . The list is endless. Naming phenomena has far more profound effects than is generally understood, greater perhaps than is even admitted. Initially theorists may quite firmly keep in mind that when they subsume a piece of observed conduct under a named category they are only resorting to a convenient form of shorthand. It allows them, they might say, to think and talk easily about observed complex human tendencies to act consistently in a variety of different situations. Too easily, however, what this shorthand stands for tends to fade from the forefront of memory. Theorists soon drift, seemingly unawares, into the habit of describing people in terms of a particular class name thinking that it accurately labels the specific conduct they are observing, measuring, etc. For example, it appears reasonable to describe a person as of average, or below or above average intelligence according to whatever criteria the observer employs for evaluating the relation between variety of contexts (e.g. intelligence test items) and the appropriateness of an individual's response in each situation (as prescribed by the theorist's definition of intelligence). I feel that this shorthand device may be dangerous and may lead to a rather dismissive approach to the phenomenon under observation.

Apart from the circularity of this type of reasoning (e.g. intelligence is whatever intelligence tests measure) the attribution of abstract psychological or sociological properties to human beings may have distasteful consequences. Are theorists saying, for example, that a person will tend to display the measured amount of intelligence on all occasions and in all possible contexts? Obviously the way in which the theorist construes intelligence is crucial here. If the notion of intelligence is restricted to purely intellectual activities: reasoning, problem-solving, performing number and word tasks, and so forth, then a theorist might not invoke the concept of intelligence when evaluating the same person's social competence, or psychomotor skills, performance of kinaesthetic tasks, or producing imaginative artifacts.

Such a bias on the part of theorists may not matter much provided that everyone else agrees with them; but there are many definitions of intelligence and all may be suspect. The failure of psychologists of individual differences to agree about the status and usefulness of attributing to persons qualities such as intelligence may be enough to raise doubts about the value of such an enterprise. The "discovery" of psychological attributes and the naming of them have reduced the richness, diversity and uniqueness of human beings through a kind of scientific stereotyping. Flesh and blood persons are not stereotypes. The natural way of talking about persons is to describe their actions or, more generally, their agency in and on the world. To describe a person's action as, say, intelligent is vastly different from attributing the quality, intelligence, to that person. The latter amounts to a generalisation from a number of observed instances which themselves may have been construed in terms of *ad hoc* theorising.

The process just described shifts attention from human action or agency (the proper subject of psychology some would say(1)) to hypothesised, abstract, perhaps fictional, qualities of the person. It is one thing to say, for example: "George acted very intelligently (or wisely, imaginatively, etc) considering the difficult choice forced upon him" but quite another to say: "George shows a lot of intelligence (or wisdom, imagination, etc) in whatever task he un-

dertakes." The first statement only requires that we be clear about the kind of actions which George might have performed in order for us to thus express ourselves correctly and accurately. The second assertion, in contrast, is global and actually untenable. We simply do not, and cannot, know enough about George to support such a sweeping statement. Even if we observed him over a lengthy period of time we might not sample the full range of George's repertoire of actions to permit us to endow George with (an undefined amount of) intelligence, wisdom or imagination (depending on whatever theory we entertain about the phenomenon behind the chosen label). Our observations might only cover the manipulation of objects, the use of tools and the making of things. (George is a craftsman, let us suppose.) We might know very little about how he copes with other practical tasks, or how he handles the cognitive or social demands thrust upon him although we could, of course, observe all these behaviours if we wished. Moreover, we might be unable to gauge the extent of George's willingness to display the full range of his action potentialities, either in general or to us in particular.

The problem, however, is much worse because the abstract noun is soon transformed into adjectival form which is then applied to individuals and even to whole groups, the type of stereotyping all too familiar in our society. The English language is rich in adjectives and most of us tend to be extravagant users of them. Insult is added to injury by introducing "always" or "never" into the epithet. "You're always so miserable (selfish, negative, etc)" or "You're never cheerful (considerate, positive, etc)." Perhaps among fallible human beings immersed in the normal hurly-burly of getting on with one another in the relatively crowded conditions of industrialised societies this type of crude stereotyping is inevitable. It is certainly understandable. We should not, however, remain complacent about this tendency (if true) for it indicates that something is wrong with our accepted way of life. But among practitioners in the human sciences the practice is inexcusable. The creation of a system of assessment procedures which not only assigns descriptors to individuals but also evaluates persons in terms of them has become the apparently respectable equivalent (scientifically speaking)

of labelling. As well say the stills outside the cinema are equivalent to the full-length feature film within, the luridly illustrated dust jacket the contents of the novel, the title of a poem the poem itself. All, at best, offer no more than a hint of the contents; it is the whole story we want: its drift, its ins and outs, its flavour as a dramatic sequence. We must watch or read the whole.

From "George acted intelligently (wisely, imaginatively)" we have moved to "George is intelligent (wise, imaginative)". The first may be true; it all depends on the criteria we use. In any case we can always ask George. We can discuss with him what else he might have done, what he thinks of these possible options, his views about what he actually did. We can, in short, explore with him the entire situation including ourselves, our criteria, our individual perceptions of the event, and so forth. Part of the discussion may focus on our right to observe and comment on his conduct, our reasons for doing so, his attitude to the whole affair. All of this would prove extremely useful in coming to an understanding about George's conduct. His statement might not agree with ours but at least we would be able to discover how our divergent viewpoints arose and the implicit personal values and perspectives which they represent or express.

As the exploratory and conversational approach which I am alluding to resembles some forms of psychotherapy or counselling procedure I must make it clear that I am not here obliquely referring to the well-known conflict between scientific and clinical methods of investigation, though I shall return to this theme shortly. What I am drawing attention to is firstly, the inherent tendency for reification to occur, perhaps encouraged by the use of abstract nouns; and secondly, to the probably unintended consequence of reification: the inevitable depersonalisation which attends the use of descriptors as a result of reifying psychological and sociological concepts.

Sir Frederick Bartlett long ago warned us of the dangers of expressing our ideas about psychological functions in the form of ordinary nouns. His own preference was for verbal nouns such as remembering, thinking, perceiving instead of memory, thought, perception. In using the present participles of verbs (action words) he may have wanted to acknowledge two pressures: the necessity of naming abst-

ract qualities in order to make them more accessible in discussion; and his wish to redirect psychologists towards the study of human conduct (purposeful, intended action) which alone offers an observable, verifiable set of events from which to gain insights into our nature. In the context of this dissertation the distinction I am emphasising is that between the person that each of us is (in our own eyes at least) and its lesser substitute, the psychophysical individual, the creation of tough-minded, empiricist psychologists. Though Bartlett would not have adopted my language he seems to have had some such notion in mind.

Naturally we cannot abolish nouns from our scientific discourse but we can translate noun-orientated propositions into a form which expresses a human being in action. Instead of talking about intelligence, for example, we can describe a person acting intelligently or alternatively a person performing an intelligent action. To assert that a person acted intelligently is to make a strong, positive statement. Positive accounts of human physical, mental and social activities reflect life as it is lived and experienced by humankind everywhere. Weak verbs such as "seem", "become", "be", and so forth are best avoided as is the passive voice. "He trod on my foot" is closer to my experience (and not merely a more vivid way of writing) than "My foot was trodden on (by him)".

Adverbs qualify verbs. Just as we choose the verb to match the action so we select the adverb to express its particular character. In short we must know what counts as an action so qualified as in the example of George acting intelligently. As I have said already our criteria are overt and potentially verifiable. Adjectives may be applied to actions for the same reason. An intelligent move in a game of chess is similarly open to observation and verification through discussion, analysis of famous games, and so on. Gurwitsch expresses the view I am presenting here much more clearly:

Both dispositions(2) and qualities(3) designate constants, i.e. regularities of experience, action, reaction, behaviour, etc., rather than mental facts which themselves fall under direct experience. The logical status of these concepts is much the same as that of physical constants such as index of refraction, electrical and thermal conductivity, specific gravity, etc. Both classes of concepts denote systematic unifications and experienced facts rather than these facts themselves; the unity

in both cases is causal not phenomenological. Concepts of both classes express systemizations and causal unifications of experienced facts through certain mental processes, and it is to these processes and procedures of mind that one must look for an ultimate clarification of the concepts in question. In the last analysis we are led back to the facts given in immediate experience as materials to be unified and systematized.(4)

In the metaphor I have used up to this point we are led back to human action, the occasion and inspiration for our systematic unifications, and to our experience of human action, as agents ourselves and observers of other human beings.

Turning now to my own topic, empathy, the reification tendency persists here as energetically as with other psychological phenomena. People are assumed to have or lack empathy and to an ascertainable degree. Most studies of empathy depend on the researcher's belief that empathy can be measured with the help of a standardised procedure such as the Truax Accurate Empathy Scale(5). Predictably they tend to describe people as empathic (or empathetic) or not as the test results indicate. In contrast I talk of empathising or of acting empathically or of entering into an empathic relation. Occasionally I use the word "empathy" when I mean it to stand for the process of empathising, of acting empathically, of entering into an empathic relation. This practice alone distinguishes my approach from that of other workers in this field with very few exceptions.

Before moving on to my second reason why empathy seems to hover in a kind of psychological limbo I first want to add two footnotes to the foregoing. My obsession with active verbs, etc., and the rejection of nouns, even verbal ones, stems from my view of persons as agents (following Macmurray(6)) and from the importance I attach to interpersonal relations especially to one in which persons strive to know and understand one another, discover how alike they are and yet how different, all without hint of judgement, manipulation, or exploitation of one by the other. I shall have more to say about persons and relations later in this prologue.

Abilities, skills and achievement

Now to the other cause of empathy's sorry state. It is entirely natural within the process of reification that the doctrine of abilit-

ies should take root. Intelligence, for example, is much too large in its scope to grasp all at once so to speak; it must be analysed into separate abilities and much of the research in this field has centred on deciding the number and type of abilities which comprise intelligence but also on establishing the appropriate procedural and statistical techniques for isolating them. Some psychologists construe human beings as rather more than possessors of abilities; humans also possess traits. The investigation of both is the special concern of personality theory and research. Theorists cannot always agree whether a particular phenomenon such as empathy is best viewed as a trait or as an ability. For my purposes this dilemma is unimportant since I construe empathy as a special kind of interpersonal relation but it is relevant to one of the main thrusts of research in this area. Many regard empathy as an ability or skill (some using these two terms as though they were equivalent and interchangeable) which can be learned and hence taught. I have no doubt that the empathic process depends on a range of skills for its fulfilment but is not itself a skill. Rather I associate the achievement or outcome of the combined efforts of those engaged in getting to know and understand one another as persons (or personal knowing for short) with the empathic relation and with a particular kind of interpersonal harmony, a state in which the members of the relation are at one with each other despite their now explored differences some of which may as yet remain unresolved, perhaps even unresolvable, forever part of the irreducible foreignness of the other. That is to say, achievement of an empathic relation, however imperfect, is signalled by achievement of some kind of interpersonal harmony. Here is another way in which my approach to the study of empathy differs from that of most other theorists.

Ryle's distinction between striving and achievement(7) is relevant here. We may all strive to enter into empathic relations with others (i.e. strive to know and understand one another) and cultivate the necessary stance of openness towards them. Striving, however, does not guarantee success and achievement of the empathic relation and interpersonal harmony may be short-lived, infrequent, in constant need of repair and sustenance. I shall try to show in the following pages how we may move into and out of the empathic relation and,

even within it, move back and forth through its various stages as we alternate between success and failure in our endeavour. For me it is the striving that matters. As Stewart points out (from his personal experience of helping alcoholics to help each other) empathy has to be worked at(8). I would add "unremittingly". This is the third way in which my treatment of empathy, both as a concept and as a phenomenon, differs from that of most workers in this area.

Interpersonal harmony

A brief note about interpersonal harmony as I understand it may prepare the reader for my special viewpoint. Interpersonal harmony is achieved when two or more persons have learned to recognise and accept unconditionally how alike yet how different they are; who have discovered how to work together on a shared project despite their differences and even their disagreements; and who can move about at peace with one another within this relationship.

Interpersonal harmony is not inconsistent with divergent points of view, dissimilar "personalities" (observed stylistic consistencies in a person's approach to life's tasks and difficulties), and long-standing, even fundamental, disagreements. Respect, eventually love, enables members of an empathic relation to sustain their self- and other-enhancing modes of living regardless of what after all are merely contingent properties of the individuals entering into it. Persons are able, with effort, to transcend, go beyond, contingent characteristics.

This view raises the question of how substantial differences have to be before the possibility of entering into, let alone sustaining, an empathic relation approaches zero. First, we have to adopt and maintain the stance of non-manipulative, non-judgemental, non-exploitative openness towards the other no matter how, in the eyes of society (and perhaps, therefore, in our own eyes despite our efforts to react otherwise) revolting, repellent, vicious the other's actions are. It is extremely difficult to view a brutal child torturer or sadistic rapist non-judgementally. Similarly, rabid racists, violent political extremists and other dangerously aggressive people excite

fear and loathing regardless of how we might wish to maintain an openness towards them as persons despite their conduct.

Secondly, to promote the empathic relation we have to explore our differences and similarities, again in a spirit of goodwill, and learn that "acceptance of others involves respect for differences from oneself, though they may be foreign to one's own personality and even inimical to it." (9) In the examples I have chosen this seems most unlikely. Finally, we must engage in a joint project (perhaps in these cases, to overcome extreme forms of anti-social behaviour) when at last we discover interpersonal harmony which in turn builds or reinforces our mutual respect and so helps to perpetuate the empathic relation. Such a possibility seems to me to be so remote that it scarcely merits the small amount of space I have devoted to it. Yet surely it is precisely in these extreme cases that empathy as I picture it is most needed. Whilst we may reject the crime and the criminal we have no right to reject the person trapped within the individual's own, often self-chosen, self-erected prison. Unless at least one person is willing and able to make the effort to forge an empathic relation with such unfortunates what hope is there for them?

Summary

To summarise the distinctions I have made so far:

- (1) I avoid reification of empathy by discarding the abstract noun, returning to the more solid ground of human conduct which I express in one of three ways: to empathise; to act empathically; to strive towards an empathic relation.
- (2) I focus on two elements of the empathic process: persons and relations. In the latter case I pay special attention to one particular kind of interpersonal relation the main aim of which is to know and understand another and to achieve some measure of interpersonal harmony.
- (3) I reject the view of empathy as ability, trait or skill. The forging of an empathic relation is a process which requires unrelenting effort and is attended by many failures and some small victories. However, it is the constant

striving that matters. Many skills are doubtless called upon to achieve an empathic relation.

Persons

I am indebted to Macmurray(8) for my approach to persons and relations. "Person", as I use the term, presents me with a problem which I must try to explain here.

I have chosen to exploit Weber's notion of the Ideal Type(10) as an analytical device. I think it is a useful tool provided one remembers that it refers to an idealised version of the real world in which a phenomenon is shorn of random perturbations, distracting detail, and so on. Physicists could scarcely begin theorising about the natural order but for useful abstractions such as frictionless bodies, perfect vacua and absolute zero. One branch of mathematics would disappear if the idea of infinitely small increments was inadmissible. And without the calculus huge areas of technology could hardly have got under way.

"Ideal" in the common language of ordinary folk means perfect; flawless; model worthy of emulation, especially in moral conduct. Neither my nor Weber's use of ideal type implies this popular, everyday, moral connotation but it is easy to see how, because these usages are based on similar ideas, e.g. that of perfection, we may inadvertently slide from one usage into the other without realising it. This may seem to be the case in my own treatment of the discontinuities between having and being, between person and its defective opposite.

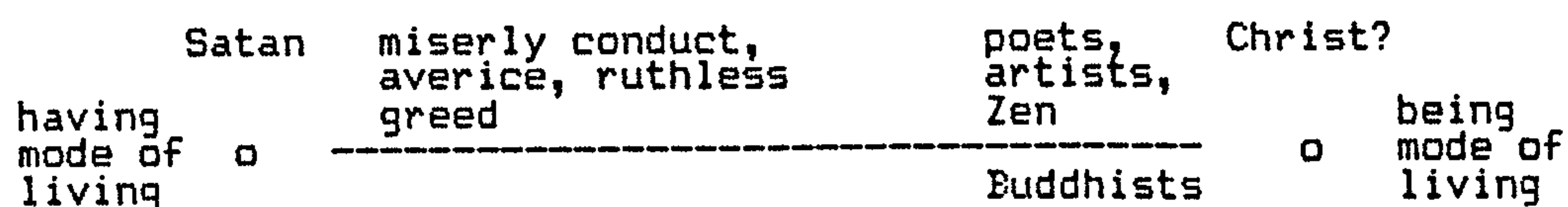
What I wish to convey is the notion that in striving to reach personhood we have in practice to settle for something less than that represented by the ideal type but which is nevertheless a considerable achievement if we succeed. This lesser goal is attainable. The lives of the saints provide many examples of different approaches to achieving a closeness to God despite backslidings, surrenders to sins of the flesh, feelings of irritation, hopelessness, frustration and privation. The striving counted for more than the failings; over

time they discovered how to reduce the incidence of what they regarded as their imperfections and barriers to union with God. Those with similar aspirations but who do not seek comfort from a deity would claim to have had similar experiences.

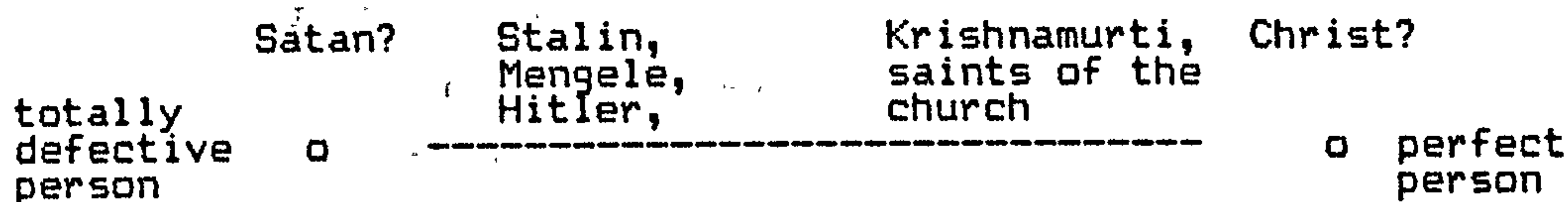
The ideal type is an abstraction, a convenient model to assist theorising but which nevertheless dramatically illustrates the goal we seek: personhood, for example, and the being way of life. Since we are prone to the usual human weaknesses we aim at something less. In our attempts to lead a more being-orientated way of life we do not totally abandon a having mode. In fact we cannot so long as we remain full members of our society as it exists around us. Still, we can pay more attention, perhaps far more, than we do now to the alternative. We may strive to achieve a more self- and other-enhancing disposition towards others while yet falling into self- and other-limiting ways. The closer we approach the near-perfect and attainable goals the more rewarding for us since it is our striving towards a being mode of life, towards personhood, which can mean so much to us. Life may thus be seen as a series of minor successes whose number and quality may, with constant striving, increase. My approach may remind readers of the aims and practices of Zen Buddhism but shorn of all mysticism, ritualistic practices and mythology.

Thus we might envisage the poles of the "mode of living" dimension to be set at a distance from a continuous line, one such pole representing "having" as one ideal type (in the Weberian sense) and the other representing "being" as the opposite ideal type. Both are hypothetical constructs, products of rational thought about this particular dimension. In contrast, the ends of the line represent actual, attainable goals, near-perfect examples of "having" and "being" respectively. All possible conditions lie between these near-perfect examples. It may seem strange to speak of near-perfect instances of "having" since they include such characters as misers, ruthless capitalistic individuals, people dominated by the lust for possessions (including the ownership of human beings), and so forth. As I pointed out earlier near-perfect does not imply a high moral tone. It simply means that these examples typify the kind of individuals who fall at this extreme. The ideal type is perhaps best

represented by Satan (since I started with a theological example) to whom it is customary to attribute an insatiable lust for the possession of our souls. The having-being dimension is shown below.



Similarly for the "person" dimension. This is linked to the idea of self- and other-enhancement and its opposite, self- and other-limitation. The examples of almost totally defective persons typify this end of the dimension.



Hence when I use the terms "person" and "personhood" the reader is to understand that I intend the notion of the attainable, near-perfect rather than the Weberian ideal type. Similarly when I contrast the being and having modes of existence I have the realisable, near-perfect examples of each in mind. The Weberian extremes serve as reference points for the phenomenon which each of these dimensions represents, stripped of the paraphernalia of the real world.

Relations

Relations strike me as the natural term to use when describing a human being's commerce with the world, assuming that we equate "human being" with "person". As I shall explain later human beings may also be construed as biological mechanisms, organisms, and psycho-physical individuals as well as persons. Action is accompanied by not only consciousness of being (even if only at the margin of consciousness as Gurwitsch(11) would say) but also by a sense of being in the world. Action confirms and reaffirms to ourselves our existential reality; we know we are because we are inseparably linked with, immersed in, our doing. Action also confirms and reaffirms the here-and-now quality of our existence; consciousness of our abiding-

ness is inseparable from our experience of the here-and-now since each experience of the here-and-now is woven into the fabric of previous experiences, moment by moment.

Persons are constantly moving into and out of relations with people, things, ideas. We adopt a position, a point of view, a perspective (sometimes literally) on this or that issue, object, individual, theory or principle. We are not always fully aware of the relations we enter into; even less often do we immediately grasp the significance or meaning or potential of those relations we are aware of. Consciousness-raising is a prominent feature of modern life but the second stage of spontaneous conceptual fulfilment, let alone a possible third stage of analysis and perhaps synthesis, is not so commonplace. All but the most insensitive individuals must nowadays be aware that women are no longer willing to endure belittlement at the hands of men. Not all men, however, who are aware of women's protests have arrived at a concept of women as persons which accommodates this awareness to the greater advantage of women. Fewer still have discovered the implications of this new concept, a discovery which must inevitably lead to a revised concept of men as persons as well as of women. These two stages also apply to women's new conception of themselves and of men; we are entitled to ask whether some feminists are any nearer completion of stages two and three than men. This example suggests that, though relations constitute the principal social mechanism through which persons operate and though their sense of being-in-the-world springs from their actions, the full import of relations and of being-in-the-world may remain at a primitive level of development.

While I do not in these pages show specifically how ordinary folk might progress to a richer awareness of their being-in-the-world and towards a competence in forming empathic relations and, in general, towards fostering a more sensitive alertness to themselves and their existential world, my account does point, I think, to ways in which thoughtful readers might design programmes of self-development in interpersonal relations.

Although I rate the empathic relation highly I do not hold that all interpersonal relations must ideally be empathic nor that we should

strive to develop empathic relations with everyone nor that, with any one person, we should try to establish an empathic relation on every occasion we meet. The critical factor is the reason for entering into a relation with someone in the first place. The pursuit of objective knowledge is hardly likely to inspire a wish to join another in anything more than a temporary and relatively superficial relation. If I am a student of geography I should probably be satisfied with a friendly but knowledgeable teacher. I would not feel the need to empathise with him or her though on occasion I might in which case the impetus for doing so would arise out of the occasion itself. Given the choice between a friendly but incompetent teacher and an unfriendly but competent one (in terms of knowledge of the subject and power put it over to me effectively so that I do learn) I should probably choose the latter.

In contrast, if a close relation already exists between persons, say between husband and wife or between two lovers or between parent and child, one member of the dyad may well seek objective knowledge of a kind which might best be sought within an empathic relation. For example the satisfaction of the sexual wishes of two people who are already close may depend on the sensitive and intimate ambience of an empathic relation for the exploration to proceed without embarrassment, guilt or fear. It may not succeed but such a taboo area of conduct is not likely to be revealed through a coldly clinical questioning of each other, at least not without affront to the sensibilities of one or both partners. The safety and security of a relationship which emerges from discovering, through the pursuit of a shared goal (in this case, sexual fulfilment for both partners), how alike yet how different they are, does hold some chance of success since, by the nature of the empathic relation, the partners interact in a non-judgemental, non-manipulative, non-exploitative spirit. Fear which afflicts many people in sexual matters may yet prevail. Even so in the empathic relation the search for the source and nature of this fear may become the shared task. All is not lost so long as they continue to strive to know and understand one another concerning these fears in an unfettered non-judgemental, non-manipulative, non-exploitative way.

Any significant "object" may prompt one or other individual to strive towards achieving an empathic relation though inspiration tends to flow from significant events or situations or contexts. (For the sake of simplicity I do not consider larger groups.) Only the member or members can decide what is or is not significant. It will frequently stem from difficulties encountered in an individual's commerce with the world but as often be located within the self, a poor self-image, for example, or persistent feelings of hopelessness. Psychological problems cover a wide band of human experience. What troubles one person may leave another unmoved. The only sound judge of what is significant is the person with the problem.

Science and the study of persons

The scientific method is one of the most powerful tools available to scientists, one which they will use whenever possible. The problem in the human sciences is that, if the proper task of psychology is the study of the person, the scientific method is difficult to apply since the observer and the observed are mutually dependent as they must be to some extent in any enterprise which involves them both as partners. (I remind readers that I differentiate "person" from other ways of construing human beings.) Objectivity is always relative; the best we can aim for is a kind of controlled subjectivity. We try to eliminate as much bias as possible by carefully choosing our variables, controls, and so forth. Where the observed is inanimate this procedure works well enough though it may not always be value-free. Personal feelings may pose problems and so may deep-seated attitudes and beliefs, and high levels of commitment to particular theoretical positions. In the study of persons the difficulties are that much greater. If the uniqueness of persons becomes the centre of our interest generalisations about humankind interfere with our enquiry. To know a person is entirely different from knowing a psychophysical individual. The latter is but a type, an instance of the general case which traditional paper and pencil techniques and other devices attempt to define usually in pursuit of a specific objective. Matching people to jobs, educational experiences, careers has become a major task of modern psychology. So also

has the evaluation of outcomes, e.g. the measurement of the effects of experiences of all kinds on different categories of human beings.

Similar aims influence the treatment of mental disorders. One of the dilemmas in clinical psychology is posed by the clinician's concern over the unique individual seeking his or her help and the pressure to show that treatment conforms to scientifically validated principles. Clinicians try to resolve this difficulty in a variety of ways but the present state of psychotherapy (for example, that there are at least a dozen different theories of therapy on offer) may not be very reassuring to patients who, even if knowledgeable, may not be sure how to decide which therapy is best able to help them.

Researchers and students who give pride of place to the uniqueness of individual persons must eschew the full rigour of the scientific method but that does not entail the abandonment of a scientific approach. In any case we always have at our disposal the foundation of all scientific activity: observation and description. At this level the investigator devises a range of observation methods and recording techniques suitable for his or her purposes. These are familiar enough in clinical and educational settings. They are increasingly finding a place in occupational and organisational investigations and some systems approaches to the study of complex human groups rely on descriptive methodologies(25).

As will become apparent in the main text I value the idea that persons can grasp the givenness of "things", including other persons, if they will only divest themselves of most of what they know and believe about the "things", allowing the latter to speak for themselves. Undoubtedly there are obstacles. We cannot unknow that which we know but we can learn to hold our knowledge in suspense. Success in phenomenological research depends on acquiring this competence. We can also learn about our preferred modes of thinking, feeling, perceiving, imagining, and so on, by the careful analysis of our descriptions of "things". We are unlikely to perceive the world in all its pristine originary character but we can try to approach this ideal as closely as we wish depending on our preparedness which itself depends on the amount of effort we invest in developing an att-

itude of openness to experience. This I discuss in the main text. I know of no alternative. I see no place here for operationalism which properly belongs to the scientific study of human beings construed as psychophysical individuals. It does not strike me as at all relevant to the scientific study of persons unless in the very weak form of operationalism: the set of propositions which formally express the specific processes of consciousness-raising which I have referred to above.

These comments apply to processes as much as to things. To know a person as a person is first of all to perceive that person as he or she is at a particular moment regardless of the knower's experience of the other at earlier meetings and the knower's previous knowledge about the person. The knower's openness and hence experience of the other's givenness is crucial therefore for personal knowing. But equally important for the knower is experiencing the act of personal knowing. The knower in his or her responsiveness to the other may adopt either a manipulative stance or an enhancing one. The stance will depend on the knower's prevailing predisposition towards the other. This experience of the prevailing mode of living: one in which the knower is primarily concerned with his or her own purposes; and one in which the knower perceives the other as a person whose own purposes are valued, is what I have in mind when contrasting the having and being modes respectively.

Preference for being accompanies, indeed reflects, respect for the other's uniqueness. Preference for having to a greater or lesser degree diverts concern for the other for his or her own sake to the other's usefulness to the knower. Consciousness of one's preferred mode of living, or actual mode at a particular moment, is thus important if the knower seeks genuine personal knowledge of another. The givenness of experience and of things yields descriptions which form the bedrock of both theory and subsequent empirical research.

In emphasising the difference between scientific studies of the person and of the psychophysical individual I am not claiming or defending the supremacy of the former over the latter. Each member of the four categories of "human being" has its own metaphor which theorists and researchers may exploit for their specific purposes as

scientists. The validity of ends and means must be determined within the boundaries of the metaphor. The categories are essentially different; studies conducted within their different rubrics will therefore call on different concepts and treatments. They must not be confused nor intermingled.

A comment on my approach

I have shown how my approach to the study of empathy differs in a number of ways from that of other theorists but as yet I have not shown why I have adopted my particular point of view. Stewart is the only theorist I have come across who based his account of empathy on his experience of real-world relationships, in his case among alcoholics. They helped each other towards sobriety but his observations of the way in which they struggled towards "freedom from thirst" guided his theorising over a period of some fifteen years or so(13). He had been influenced by Macmurray(6) whose Gifford lectures he attended in the early '50s. He was also impressed by Scheler's "The Nature of Sympathy"(14). It seemed to me that the model of empathy he elaborated out of these three materials: his own experience, the Gifford lectures, and Scheler's study of a related fellow-feeling, provided a sound starting point for my own project. I have extended his notions of respect, love and good-will; moved towards Scheler's rather than Freud's view of identification; expanded the idea of different ways of knowing to contrast with personal knowing (one of the aims of the empathic relation); more clearly established the concept of empathy as a relation; and set the whole empathic process in a wider context by comparing it with pseudo-empathy, quasi-empathy, other forms of fellow-feeling and other types of emotional bond.

It seemed to me that a theory rooted in experience, even if not my own, and centred on persons and relations had some face validity which other theories lacked. It also struck me that my own approach was closer to life as lived. Human beings see themselves as persons, at least in the culture with which I am familiar(26), even if they might be hard put to explain exactly what this means. And their

natural way in the world is through relations. So no other route seemed so logical to me.

An overview

My conviction has grown throughout this study that the proper task of psychology is the study of persons or rather of personal being and that therefore there is a pressing need to re-examine the ontological and epistemological foundations of psychology. I have avoided confusing my own modest investigation with this much more important and grander venture but inevitably the latter has influenced not only my orientation but also my theorising. For this reason my first chapter is well-called An Outline Theory of Empathy. Although I would be the first to acknowledge my own limitations as a thinker and theorist, an outline theory it must be because, as my argument evolves, issues confront me which belong to the greater enterprise. The works of those steeped in the hermeneutics tradition (Ricouer (15), Gauld and Shotter(16)), or in phenomenology (Stein(17), Schutz (18), Scheler(14), Thines(19), the Dusquesnes group(12)), or in the nature of personal being (Macmurray(6), Fromm(20), Harre(21)), provide ample proof of the complexity of these issues. I indicate, either in the text or in the footnotes at the end of each chapter, where I have had to lay aside further discussion of important matters because they would have taken me beyond the closer boundaries of my chosen domain.

My dissertation seeks to describe the empathic process as accurately as possible within the spirit of phenomenology though without allegiance to one particular phenomenological viewpoint. The first chapter establishes my view of empathy as a relation. I explore in some detail not only the characteristics of this relation but also the sufficient and necessary conditions for its creation and continued nurturance. I examine a number of different types of empathic relation as well as instances of a misplaced attribution of empathy. In the second chapter I examine other interpersonal relations but from the specific standpoint of knowing. Since I interpret the empathic relation as one route to personal knowing it seems essential to consider other kinds of knowing and to explore their relationship both

to the empathic process and to personal knowing. As part of this analysis I introduce alternative conceptualisations of the human being: biological mechanism, organism, psychophysical individual as well as person. Chapter 2 concludes with a brief study of emotional bonds; because the empathic relation is a union with another coloured by, and perhaps founded on, emotion it seemed necessary to compare it with other similar or apparently related bonds. Between them chapters 1 and 2 present and elaborate the concept and phenomenon lurking behind the label "empathy" without launching into the deeper waters of a psychology of personal being. On the other hand I feel that these two chapters make a tentative start in this direction.

The three strands of my argument: the empathic relation, other interpersonal relations and emotional bonds, reinforced each other and led to constant revision of my ideas about the nature of the empathic process. In broad outline I agree with Stein(17) that it has properties reminiscent of perception but "a kind of perceptual act" for what? What prompts this quasi-perceptual experience? Can anyone empathise? What part does the empathic relation play in everyday life? It was questions such as these that I kept in mind while working on this dissertation.

Scheler(14), despite his beautiful analysis of fellow-feeling, failed to see in this particular fellow-feeling a genuine human experience, an authentic way of personal knowing. Yet his phenomenological analysis of the forms of sympathy and his comparison of genuine sympathy with look-alike phenomena proved invaluable when I attempted to disentangle the various kinds of empathic relation and to show how it differed from other kinds of fellow-feeling. Stewart (22) demonstrated the important part played by imitation and deliberate identification in the continuously forming and reforming activity which constitutes the dynamic character of the empathic process. He also demonstrated the pivotal position of a shared common goal or ideal in providing the mainspring for joint action within the fully-fledged empathic relation. As he said, empathy has to be worked for. Not for him the prevailing notion of a moment of spontaneous enlightenment which belongs if anywhere to a romantic and gothic past.

Chapter 3 reviews a selection of the empathy literature which, though only a relatively small part of the total, highlights the main theoretical thrusts discernible in this field. My selection also includes the major seminal thinkers who have contributed to the study of empathy since the turn of the century. Most of this material is post-40s but very little of it seems seriously to explore either the concept or the phenomenon. I have also deliberately tried to illustrate the diversity of ideas which have been explored and the variety of labels which have been used. I have not attempted to evaluate the research methods or instruments used. Unless and until an investigator has delineated a phenomenon any attempt to measure it seems premature. Neither have I attempted to isolate the cognitive and productive resources which might underlie the empathic process nor do I offer criteria for deciding the competence of a particular performer or the quality of a particular performance in forming or sustaining an empathic relation.

Some limitations

This work has a number of limitations one of which is an omission which I can justify. Although, as I have already said, I think it necessary to know what empathy is before plunging into experimental investigations, now that I have made some suggestions concerning the first might it not also be a good idea to speculate about the second? For example, an outline research programme might encourage myself and others to go out and observe the empathic process in action. Had I rested content with the kind of conceptual exploration which is far too often met in the empathy literature then some empirical work might have been possible; an examination of some of this literature will show that the customary clarification of terms and so forth barely fills an introductory section in most journal articles. My study tries to clarify the concept but especially the phenomenon itself and in some detail.

This points to another possible shortcoming, that the account presented here is not really a phenomenological analysis. It is perfectly true that I did not sit down and consciously adopt a Husserlian phenomenological stance (as did Edith Stein), nor alternatively one

in emulation of Scheler. Insofar as I have taken account of Stein and Scheler and, in general, worked in the spirit of phenomenology (which, whatever the peculiar attitude of a particular phenomenologist, is essentially to let phenomena speak for themselves) I consider I have acquitted myself well enough for my purposes.

My preference for the phenomenological tradition rather than the newer hermeneutical is partly because the former seems closer to my leaning towards Stewart's study of the empathic process. It also seems to me to be more obviously relevant to psychology though, as Gauld and Shotter(16) show in their use of the hermeneutical approach, this is really a matter of interpretation. However, psychology as a scientific study of the person must, it seems to me, take a new direction. The choice seems to lie between the phenomenological and the hermeneutical perspective. For my limited purposes I have opted to take the former path. This decision does not indicate my judgement about the alternative. The likelihood is that psychology will gain immeasurably from both.

I have eschewed all theories about the nature of humankind, about the nature of experience, of perception and motivation, and so on; I have relied solely on what I take to be self-evident "facts" (which is not to say that they may never be questioned nor that they may never be found wanting) which ultimately rest on everyday experience. In any event everyday experience is a potent source of knowledge whether or not it expresses some universal truth. In the appendices I have included a note on phenomenology and subjectivity to make clearer my own position (which is still evolving).

The present work, despite references here and elsewhere, is not a philosophical analysis, a discipline in which I have little competence. Nor is it a psychological study although many of my sources are to be found in the psychological literature. Rather I have drawn on whatever material seemed relevant to my enquiry including Zen Buddhism(23), the works of Krishnamurti(24), world literature and the arts, as well as psychology, sociology, anthropology and those philosophers who have shown a special interest in the person such as Macmurray(6) and Harré(21). I have tended to be very selective and

have doubtless incurred some penalties in so doing. My own bias is to stay close to ordinary human experience and to respect folk wisdom despite its obvious limitations. To describe the empathic relation is my task and all is grist to my mill that serves that purpose.

Before launching into the study proper two observations might prepare the reader for what lies ahead. The presentation of complex ideas poses problems for both writer and reader alike. The story cannot be told all at once so some structure has to be created within which both of us can move about freely and purposefully. Unfortunately no framework can cope with the range and diversity of interdependencies among concepts which characterise complex subject matters. The reader has to take a great deal on trust in the expectation that the author will eventually clarify outstanding doubts, misgivings, uncertainties and the like. Chapter 1 contains most that is new; at any rate it is likely to be the least familiar to a reader approaching a study of empathy for the first time. My style tends to be stark and assertive in the belief that unqualified propositions are not only easier to grasp than more cautiously expressed ones but they are also more readily put to the test. Hence some readers might prefer to read the work from start to finish and then re-read chapter 1. Alternatively the reader might first read chapter 3 and then go through the whole work from beginning to end.

The second point concerns the general focus of the study. For example, I have tended to contrast the open, non-manipulative, non-judgemental approach to the world with its opposite: the manipulative, instrumental approach. In the empathic relation, I argue, the preference is for the former way of life in contrast to the latter which in essence lies at the heart of the power relation. Empathy and power I envisage as opposing modes of relating to the world especially to other people. The reader might be led to think, therefore, that the instrumental, exploitative approach was the only interpersonal pathology of interest to social psychologists especially as I have linked it with the prevalent having mode of existence which seems to me to be typical of modern industrialized societies. Other pathologies exist, however. For instance, one which has been intensively investigated centres on the concept of rigidity. The

work of Rokeach and the many studies of prejudice from that of Adorno and his colleagues onwards draw attention to the central part played by rigidity in creating specific other-limiting (and self-limiting) dispositions. Rigidities rest on a legalistic attitude; rigid people construe the world in highly moralistic terms. Crime and punishment, conformity to rules, obedience, stress on discipline and orderliness enforced if necessary (but justly) are prominent features in their psychological landscape. Particular rigid individuals may on occasion be manipulative but this fact does not necessarily flow from their rigidity. On the contrary (unless one adopts a Freudian perspective) it might be shown that where the manipulator favours a Machiavellian and subtle approach the rigid dogmatist typically does not. From personal observation at close quarters of a number of rigid dogmatists over a long period of time their preferred interpersonal style tends to be one of barely contained righteous indignation. Undiluted positive moral statements and no-nonsense uncompromising stands on every issue that interests the rigid individual seem to be typical. The fact that I have not in general discussed this particular interpersonal pathology means only that in making a choice of conduct at odds with the empathic relation I chose what I felt was its natural opposite. A more detailed analysis of empathy would have to take rigid individuals also into account.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I aim to trace the importance of the empathic relation in promoting the acquisition of personhood (which is related to interpersonal harmony and the being mode of existence) but at the same time I want to discover whether and how it might be possible to improve our ordinary, everyday lives though they tend to be rooted, whether we like it or not, in a having mode of existence. My approach contrasts with Krishnamurti's(24), whose ideas have helped to form my own. He feels, with some justification, that you cannot aspire to the way of being and, at the same time, try to better your lot within the way of having. The latter gets in the way of the former; in fact the energy expended in enhancing one's material existence or improving that of others, however virtuously, leaves

little for the more important task of achieving interpersonal harmony. I feel that his approach is too uncompromising for ordinary mortals. Creating a juster, fairer society is a desirable aim since there is so much injustice and harshness and suffering in our society which no exhortation to adopt the way of being is going to remedy. But it does matter how remedial action is determined and carried out. Hence my emphasis on striving to become a person (the centre of self- and other-enhancement) or rather a near-person, its potentially attainable alternative.

Finally, in taking the title of my thesis from David Stewart's 1965 paper I not only accurately describe the nature of my study; I also acknowledge my debt to him.

Notes to Prologue

- 1 Shotter, 1975.
- 2 e.g. "...attitudes of love, admiration, esteem, hatred, etc., which one person adopts with regard to another." Gurwitsch, 1985, p.15.
- 3 e.g. "...likings and dislikings, tendencies, interests, gifts, talents, etc..." ibid. p.15.
- 4 ibid. pp.15-16.
- 5 Truax, 1967; a brief critique appears in Appendix 3.
- 6 Macmurray, 1956, 1961.
- 7 Ryle, 1963; pp.143ff.
- 8 Stewart, 1956.
- 9 ibid. p.48.
- 10 Weber, 1949; pp.89ff.
- 11 Gurwitsch, 1985.
- 12 Valle and King, 1978.
- 13 Stewart, 1960.
- 14 Scheler, 1954.
- 15 Ricouer, 1981.
- 16 Gauld and Shotter, 1977.
- 17 Stein, 1970.
- 18 Schutz, 1970, 1971, 1973.
- 19 Thines, 1977.
- 20 Fromm, 1979.
- 21 Harré, 1983.
- 22 Stewart, 1956, 1960, 1965.
- 23 e.g. Suzuki, 1960; Fromm, 1960; Humphries, 1962; Pirsig, 1974.
- 24 There are many titles. A sample is included in the bibliography.
- 25 Carter et al., 1984; Checkland, 1981.
- 26 I have not considered other views of the person because of space limitations. A more detailed study of the person would clearly have to taken different cultural perspectives into account. See, for example, Marsella et al., 1985.

AN OUTLINE THEORY OF EMPATHY

1.1 Introduction

Empathy refers to a particular kind of relation between a self and an other-than-self.(1) In the following sections I shall try to show what is peculiar about the empathic relation, what characteristics distinguish it from other relations into which people enter. (In the next chapter I shall compare empathy with some of these other relations.) Then follows a detailed study of these characteristics and an analysis of different types of empathic relation beginning with the ideal (mutual empathy) and ending with the apparently least promising in which a person, not at his or her best, is confronted by a hostile individual. The chapter concludes with an examination of some doubtful cases of empathy: with non-humans, including inanimate objects; with one's own self; with entertainers, 'generalised' and historical others. In short I consider the boundaries of the empathic relation: with whom or what may a self join in empathy and under what conditions?

For the sake of clarity of exposition in this chapter I shall make two simplifying assumptions: in the human case the other is another self, and the relation is between two members only.

1.11 A summary of the argument

- 1 Human beings exhibit an urge to know and understand other human beings. This urge is part of a general urge towards activity, the striving to grow, to exercise their cognitive and productive resources and to develop into whatever human beings are capable of becoming.
- 2 Striving and achievement are not necessarily causally related, nor even correlated. However, achievement without effort is not possible, at least not in the natural world.
- 3 To strive to know and understand another human being is different from striving to know and understand non-human objects.

- 4 To strive to know and understand another human being is to try to know and understand the person beneath mere surface characteristics, to penetrate the accidents of specific spatio-temporal occasions and events, to know someone as he or she really is. Other interpretations of "human being" are biological mechanism, organism and psychophysical individual.
- (a) A biological mechanism is that irreducible entity that can be called a living creature. A malformed, diseased, ailing or incomplete living creature is a malformed, etc., biological mechanism.
 - (b) An organism is a biological mechanism in its natural habitat. Habitats can be constructed. In the case of human beings artifactual environments are typical, extensive, ubiquitous and in most societies dominant.
 - (c) A psychophysical individual is an organism characterised as possessing mind. Mind implies consciousness but the reverse may not be true. The relationship between mind and consciousness is problematical.
 - (d) A person is a psychophysical individual construed as initiator of action. Action is viewed as the outcome of purpose or intention, as the result of conscious, deliberate choice and therefore carried out in at least partial knowledge of its possible effects on others. Action is thus a social and not just an individual-centred phenomenon. Action, therefore, implies accountability though not necessarily the acceptance of responsibility. Nevertheless persons are held to be responsible for their actions.
- 5 The striving to know and understand another human being construed as person I call personal knowing.
- 6 To seek personal knowledge of a person is to try to enter into and sustain a particular kind of relation with that person.
- 7 I call this relation empathic and distinguish it from other relations which do not centre on personal knowing.
- 8 Personal knowing takes precedence over other forms of knowing human beings because the quality of interpersonal relations

- exerts such a powerful and potentially beneficial or harmful influence on the quality of human existence.
- 9 Experience of the quality of human existence suggests that it is directly related to modes of living: either the having or the being mode.
 - 10 The being mode of living stresses essence rather than appearance. It focusses on the aliveness of others, on authentic relatedness with others and with the world at large. It respects the true (essential) nature of all entities in the world. It recognises the urgency and purity of dynamic becoming, of the necessity for things to be what they are and no other and to become what is in their nature to become. It acknowledges the striving of living things in particular. It is timeless in the sense that it resides in the here and now; past and future play no part in the experience of the beingness of the world.
 - 11 The having mode of existence is marked by its characteristic concern with possessions and possessing both in the narrow sense of outright ownership but also in the more general sense of mastery and domination of all that is other-than-self. In the having mode the metaphor of ownership affects thoughts about and attitudes towards the world. It distances self from experience; it alienates self from the authentic experiencing person each of us is. Having is profoundly rooted in a spatio-temporal world, or rather the world tends to be construed solely in spatio-temporal terms. The having mode thus predisposes its adherents to manipulative, exploitative approaches to the world, including other human beings.
 - 12 Persons may range from near-perfect exponents of the having mode to near-perfect seekers after the being mode of living.
 - 13 This means, in effect, that persons may try to create a power relation with others or attempt to forge an empathic relation according to their choice of preferred mode of living.

- 14 Since in the power relation one person attempts to manipulate or exploit the other in order to achieve his or her own purposes it follows that such a person will tend to adopt limiting rather than enhancing strategies and conduct.
- 15 There thus appears to be a relationship between modes of living and either limiting or enhancing strategies and conduct. The having mode is associated with limiting and the being mode with enhancing strategies and conduct.
- 16 Whatever promotes the personal development of self: knowledge, understanding, self-confidence, self-esteem, extending one's capabilities, increasing one's competence in their use, accepting responsibility for one's actions, and so on, is described as self-enhancing. To the extent that effort expended in self-enhancement takes into account the needs and wishes of others I consider that it will also promote other-enhancement whenever the self and other establish interpersonal relations especially the empathic relation. Enhancing strategies and conduct find a more fertile soil in the being rather than the having mode of existence.
- 17 Whatever obstructs, denies or diminishes the other in those aspects of personal development listed in the preceding paragraph I describe as other-limiting. The act of limiting the other tends also to limit the self since the energy required to carry out other-limiting strategies and conduct greatly exceeds that available for self-enhancement. Moreover the other-limiting approach directly conflicts with self-enhancement of the kind referred to in 16 above. Other-limiters seem to be locked in a power relation which they are forced to maintain. Everything has to be sacrificed to maintain their dominance. Other- and self-limiting conduct and strategies prosper in a having mode of existence.
- 18 Self- and other-enhancing strategies and conduct I hold to be preferable to self- and other-limiting ones on the grounds that ordinary people favour the former if given the choice. Positive self-image, feelings of being valued, confidence in oneself,

and a sense of physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing are outcomes commonly experienced within an environment characterised by a self- and other-enhancing ambience. The formal body of knowledge drawn from psychotherapy, counselling, good teaching practice and the exercise of other caring relationships support this folk view. Much of world literature tends to confirm both folk and professional viewpoints.

- 19 The contrast between having and being modes of existence is matched by a parallel contrast between the power and empathic relations.
- 20 Within the power relation human beings are degraded as persons; they tend to be treated as non-persons, as mere things.
- 21 I reserve the word "person" for one who tends to prefer the being end of the having-being dimension and whose strategies and conduct tend to be self- and other-enhancing. As I have already pointed out in the Prologue I have in mind near-perfect persons. Those at the other end of these two dimensions I call defective persons (or near-perfect examples of this ideal type (in the Weberian sense).
- 22 I do so in order to conform to deep-seated attitudes and beliefs about the value of psychotherapy, counselling, religious teaching, and other helping practices. The aim in all of them is to promote those aspects of personal growth which I have listed in 16 and 18 above.
- 23 Hence I argue that:
 - (a) persons are created by persons through self- and other-enhancing strategies and conduct;
 - (b) this is more likely to happen within a being mode of existence;
 - (c) persons will favour that relation with another which fosters and sustains knowledge and understanding of the other as a person which depends on and flows from the preference for a being mode of existence and for self- and other-enhancing strategies and conduct.

- 24 The circularity implied by the above argument is unavoidable. Persons who act as described were themselves formed by the same process. Given that a person already exists (i.e. one who favours a self- and other-enhancing approach towards others and who tends to prefer a being mode of living) the rest follows.

1.2 CHARACTERICS OF THE EMPATHIC RELATION

I shall try to show that striving to know and understand another human being as a person, to draw as close to another as a person wishes and the other consents to, is possible if one or both try to forge and sustain a special kind of relation. This relation I call empathic. There are those who think that we can never really know or understand another. They may be right but we can try nevertheless and we can also, as a matter of conscious choice, aim for a lesser target: to know and understand another as far as we can however slight that may be. The alternative is to remain overawed by the foreignness of the other, to regard the other as a schemer, a deceiver, as someone to be feared or guarded against, or treated with distant politeness, or false warmth; all are interpersonal strategies which must be familiar to moderately alert and perceptive adults in our society and probably in most other societies.

A number of characteristics distinguish the empathic from other kinds of relation:

- (a) at least one member of the relation must be a *person*;
- (b) at least one member is striving to know and understand the other *as a person* through direct contact with the other. In the ideal type (i.e. mutual empathy) both participants are thus engaged. (Typically the member in (a) and (b) is the same person.)
- (c) the relation is non-manipulative;
- (d) the main outcome is the clarification and enhancement of the personhoods (personal identities, individual personalities) of *both* members of the relation;
- (e) another outcome is interpersonal harmony;
- (f) it fosters and emphasises the "being" mode of existence over the dominant "having" mode of our culture.

These six characteristics of the empathic relation must be present in order that it qualify as empathic but because of its nature they cannot all emerge at once. It develops over time which may be considerable but when it does finally evolve all these characteristics will be evident. Before we examine each of them in turn I must explore some common uses of the term "person" to expand the remarks I have already made in the prologue.

In ordinary usage "person" equates with mature, adult human being. For example, when we say "So-and-so is an excellent person to consult if you want good advice" or "So-and-so is a most inadequate individual, not at all the sort of person we need" or "That's the person from the house across the street" we are referring to more than simply human being. Mature adulthood is almost invariably understood in every case. It is rare to hear babies or children referred to as persons. Other more diminutive terms spring to our lips: kid, baby, youngster, lass, lad, young fellow, teenager, youth. Even when we do use expressions involving the word "person", young person for example, we are explicitly drawing attention to immaturity, a fledgling, someone approaching but still far from adulthood.

The increasing concern with human rights has, it is true, led to the idea that babies and other young people are persons in the sense in which I use the word. They merit respect just for themselves as they are at any one moment. This usage is very rare however. The bias in our understanding of the idea of person towards the notion of maturity, adulthood, autonomy, has some unfortunate consequences. For example, children of all ages tend to be regarded as miniature, incomplete or even ill-formed adults. Wittingly or unwittingly we judge them by the criteria normally applied to the evaluation of adult conduct and achievement. One consequence of this tendency is to belittle or devalue childish ways and even childhood itself. In fact we often describe an adult as childish in order partially to explain his or her conduct which otherwise remains incomprehensible to us. The individual has reverted to childish, i.e. immature, undisciplined, irresponsible, egocentric ways, we say, and perhaps even go so far as to indulge in some "common-sense" psychological theorising. Another far more damaging consequence is the devaluation of the

child as a human being. "Children should be seen and not heard", "Spare the rod and spoil the child" and similar proverbs reflect this deep-rooted, almost dismissive, attitude towards children which can be met in our society even in the present climate of so-called liberal sentiment.

There is, then, in our ordinary social commerce a preference for employing the word "person" when we mean to suggest or refer to mature, responsible adulthood. This usage, however, does carry within it a shade of meaning which bypasses the potentially dysfunctional, implicit assumption of adult superiority. I am referring to the fact that person is neuter. It carries no sense of gender. If we say "Millie is a nice person" we visualise a different phenomenal object than when we say "Millie is a nice woman". The pleasing quality that Millie conveys to us is different in the two cases because personhood is felt to be different from womanhood. What persons have in common is not the same as what women have in common. Millie's appeal as a person owes nothing to her womanliness whereas her attraction, say, as a woman may though not necessarily in the narrow, modern sense of sexual attractiveness. This property-less character of person can be extended so as to exclude all contingent properties: age (though, as we have just seen, this is not typical; most of us think of persons as adults), social class, ethnic group membership, nationality (a special case of the preceding), state of health, marital status, religious or political allegiance, and so on. As we know only too well the attribution of certain properties to human beings in effect tends to label them as non-persons or inferior individuals in the eyes of those making the attributions.

In the popular imagination to be a person is to be mature, to be valued regardless of some properties, yet to be judged critically concerning some other properties. This ambivalence in ordinary everyday speech need not matter much since at this level language has, as one of its prime functions, the maintenance of a social steady-state. Through linguistic conventions people seek comfortable social adjustments with one another and strive to avoid contention and stress. Different groups of people will thus establish a rapprochement, internally with those whom they perceive as their own kind

and externally with those whom they see as different in some important way. Trouble may arise only if the various groups are forced into close and sustained contact. Then the poverty of the popular view of "person" becomes apparent. In the conflict between divergent religious or political or social or ethnic groups "person" simply means "someone like me"; the rest effectively become non-persons labelled with whatever term of abuse is popular at the time.

This nuance of diminution behind the word "person" finds expression in other ways. For example, we frequently hear quantitative expressions such as "Sexual deviants are only half-persons" or "To do that job well you've really got to be a whole person". It will become apparent as this thesis unfolds that attempting to qualify person poses problems. It introduces the notion of discontinuity between some unspecified ideal and actual, achievable degrees of personhood. I have tried to show in the prologue how, by using Weber's notion of Ideal Types, we can accommodate the discontinuities between the unattainable ideals or perfect types (of having and being, of person and non-person, of enhancement and limitation), on the one hand, and the continua between these extremes which represent the achievable degrees of mastery in these three areas. By means of this device we can imagine individuals moving back and forth along these continua though typically demonstrating a tendency to express a fairly small range of possibilities for most of the time. We may strive towards enhancement, for instance, but occasionally slide back into self- and other-limiting ways; or perhaps we show a proneness to limiting conduct with occasional successes in enhancing others and self.

Thus person conveys a number of ideas within it. It is property-less; at any moment we might imagine "person" to represent the configurations of meanings a human being has created out of his or her life experiences through which the present moment is interpreted and absorbed or not as the case may be. The configuration is complex, dynamic, fragile, and doubtless subject to distortion, fading and corruption but nevertheless amazingly robust in that normally persons maintain a secure grasp of their sense of identity (personhood) and its abidingness from moment to moment. In popular use "person" tends to be associated with maturity which is unfortunate but poss-

ibly reflects a profound belief in the perfectibility of human beings with advancing age. I am suggesting that we use "person" to refer to human beings at the positive ends of the three continua since they describe humans in action, making their way in the world in their own unique individual fashion, itself the outcome of their experiences within many different microcultures. The unique trajectory we call a human life is thus a combination of experiences and meanings dynamically configured and reconfigured moment by moment yielding a stable yet dynamic sense of identity. Which end of the three continua a particular person will be at a particular moment will depend substantially on the preferred mode of existence at the time. Thus "person" in this text refers to an individual human being who tends to operate at the being end of the having-being dimension and at the enhancement end of the enhancing-limiting dimension.

To be a person in the near-perfect sense of the word is to strive to raise the quality of our day-to-day trading with the world that surrounds and includes us. A major thrust of this thesis is that, if we value harmony in the world, we all need to work hard and insightfully at *becoming* persons, in the near-perfect sense as I have described it.

Other connotations of "person" will emerge as we proceed.

1.21 Only persons can empathise

For an empathic relation to develop between two (or more) people there must exist at least one *person* among them to initiate it. Other terms are used to refer to human beings: biological mechanism, organism, psychophysical individual, as well as person. We might also include self, agent and actor. In this dissertation self and person are used interchangeably. The literature on the self is vast, confusing and inconclusive. The justification for equating self and person is purely a matter of convenience; several writers use the two terms as though they refer to the same phenomenal object(2). Agent is less inclusive than person or self insofar as the former refers to the active, volitional aspect of the latter. Persons are more than mere agents for they are also

the victims of happenings which befall them. Explanations of events and their consequences cannot draw solely on the notion of agents and intentions. In my study of empathy I believe that no confusion will result from the way I use the three terms: person, self and agent; the context will make clear what I mean in each case.(3)

The term actor I tend to eschew for it savours of the dramatic approach to human action adopted by certain social psychologists within the sociological camp many of whom work in the symbolic interactionist tradition. Some workers in social skills favour this viewpoint; "keeping the other in play" is a metaphor used explicitly by Argyle but implicitly by many others, perhaps unwittingly because of the predominant use of a skills model of human interaction. It will become apparent as this study unfolds that the idea of human beings as actors, "playing" roles and following scripts is completely alien to my understanding of persons, interpersonal interactions and the empathic relation.(4)

In order that my own study may get under way I adopt the working hypothesis that my chosen terms: mechanism, organism, psychophysical individual, and person are sufficient for my purposes and that all four are mutually exclusive in the sense that they belong to four different explanatory or descriptive systems. Ideas and concepts which may be appropriate and proper in one framework may not be so in the others. Each is unique and is related to a specific type of enquiry or point of view. Moreover, it is neither appropriate nor sensible for an observer to work in more than one framework at a time when dealing with a specific question or perspective unless he or she explicitly gives reasons for so doing and in any event clearly distinguishes the different analytical systems(5). Failure to observe this rule can only lead to confusion as so much of current behavioural and social science demonstrates, or so it seems to me.(6)

Other features of person are considered in the next section. The collective theory, practice and justification of the interpersonal professions point to an additional view of the person as one who

- (a) has a healthy self-image(7); i.e. is generally aware of his or her strengths and weaknesses and is reasonably well-adjusted to this knowledge; a person is able to cope with the vicissitudes of life without resorting to defensive or manipulative strategies;
- (b) tends to be well-disposed towards others; he or she approaches and deals with them non-manipulatively and adopts a stance of openness and respect towards them (using the word "respect" in Fromm's sense of seeing again as though for the first time however familiar these others may have become);
- (c) is aware of his or her own self-worth and so tends to act in ways which will foster the sense of self-worth in others; i.e. persons tend to nourish the individual personalities (personhoods) of others.

Words such as "generally", "reasonably", "tends to" and so forth acknowledge, as I think we must, the inherent fallibility of humankind. Persons strive to be self- and other-enhancing in non-manipulative ways. In this endeavour their performance can approach an ever-increasing competence though they will occasionally give way to normal human failings. As I shall try to show later these three qualities of persons may be acquired by anyone who is willing to make and sustain the necessary effort. However the acquisition process is only possible within the empathic relation since only one who is already a person (as I understand the term) can help another to attain his or her unique personhood. This, too, I shall try to demonstrate. I can imagine only two other possibilities: either personhood is generated spontaneously or it is facilitated through the empathic relation but this is not strictly necessary. I can and do imagine that the discovery of the separateness of self and other-than-self is an instantaneous and spontaneously experienced event, a discriminatory act akin to a revelation. However, the emergence of self is an event whereas the acquisition of personhood is a long-drawn out evolutionary process in which similarities and differences with non-self entities are accumulated, assimilated

into the fabric of the self's personal biography substantially through the self's own agency (as an existential being consciously interacting with the real world) though initially and primarily also through the agency of others especially of significant caring others such as parents as we shall see later.

The possibility that the empathic relation may not be necessary for the acquisition of personhood though it may greatly facilitate the process must be examined again after we have had a closer look at empathising in action.(8) I ignore a third possibility: that persons are products of the natural order, i.e. personhood is an innate property of all human beings. Simple observation of the new-born infant's growth and most adult behaviour do not support such a hypothesis. In contrast biological mechanisms and organisms are unambiguously products of nature, though greatly enhanced through subsequent nurture.

It might, of course, be argued that I am so construing personal growth and the empathic relation that the latter logically implies the former. In fact I also assert that personal growth implies the development of an empathic relation. In effect, therefore, I hold that the development of persons and the evolution of the empathic relation are identical processes; the change of words merely indicates a change of perspective, the point of view of the observer of the phenomenon. I shall try to make this clear as we proceed.

1.22 Striving to know and understand the other

The striving to know and understand another as a person through personal contact lies at the heart of the empathic relation and is its prime distinguishing characteristic. We may know and understand another as a biological mechanism, as an organism, as a psychophysical individual; we have developed methods and constructed disciplines for doing so: the life, behavioural and social sciences, but none of these reveals the person. A social psychology of the person is feasible but it would have a very different content and method-

ology from today's orthodox psychologies, social or otherwise. Moreover, there are different ways of knowing: the personal, the aesthetic, the scientific, the practical, the religious or spiritual, the social, each of which is valid in its own sphere. To know and understand another person (personal knowing) is thus a distinctive form of knowing which has a distinctive object: the person.

A person is that entity which, through acting on the real world, is conscious of its doing and therefore of its existence. Because an action is a manifestation of an intention a person may be described as that which is conscious of the union between inner and outer worlds of experience, not analytically but purely existentially.(9) A person is a self-conscious, existential unity of intention and action. The experience of action in and on the real world is the focal point of personal consciousness. Thus do we acquire a sense of continuity, abidingness, self-direction, self-consciousness and autonomy that experientially defines for us our existence as persons.(10)

A person is also a centre of self-worth. Human action is not blind; nor is the underlying intention. Both are functions of choice and therefore imply and express value. But the value relates to the self as the doer and the thinker. The self-referential character of action (however altruistic) is emphasised in interpersonal interaction in which the greater part of human time and energy is spent and which offers the richest field for personal growth and satisfaction. Interpersonal relations can also impede personal development and create dissatisfaction. What is unique about interactions with others is their capacity to create and enhance, or diminish and destroy a person's sense of self-worth. A person is thus a socially dependent centre of self-worth, an entity created by others. In order that a self may achieve a healthy personhood these others must themselves first be persons.

Persons flourish in action, in community with others, in relations which establish and confirm self-worth. The highest value that can be conferred on them and that they can bestow on others is love. That is to say when one person loves another he or she non-manipulatively recognizes and acknowledges the other's unique beingness,

grasps their givenness, responds sensitively to the other and fosters his or her growth as a person. It is these qualities of persons that one tries to discover and understand in personal knowing and which one strives through empathising to cultivate in the other. Personal knowing initially is direct and intuitive and depends on contact with the other. Moreover, the essence of persons is revealed in their expressiveness: in words, gestures, movements, and other body signs. (The expressiveness of "words" springs from the speaker's choice of words and personal style with them, the emphasis, tone, idiosyncratic usage and pronunciation, and similar paralinguistic indicators of the speaker's uniqueness.) The whole of the person is in the expressiveness and hence the possibility of deception, though ever present, is reduced. The deceiver, the manipulator, the schemer: all are betrayed by their expressiveness if only the observer is skilled in 'reading' the signs. It is for this reason that facility in grasping the givenness of others (which is described in more detail in later sections) is essential for personal knowing (and, as we shall see, for other kinds of knowing as well) for its aim is to know and understand the person as a person, i.e. as he or she essentially is. (11)

Personal knowing through direct contact with the other could stand further analysis. Physical contact is essential to the infantile differentiation process in which a self emerges and becomes self-conscious and simultaneously conscious of an other-than-self. Direct contact, though not necessarily involving physical touching important though this appears to be initially for personal growth and integrity, continues to be a prime source of personal knowing throughout childhood, adolescence and adulthood. As we mature, however, the nature of this contact extends beyond the purely sensory. For example, conversations with others convey meanings beyond the literal significance of the words. Configurations of expressive signs convey more than each individual sign. In both examples the pattern, or relations, or configurations are potent sources of information about the other and about the observer which can be lost if the observer is not sensitive to their existence. As we shall see one aspect of aesthetic knowing is the readiness or facility with which an observ-

er can grasp the quality of the relatedness of phenomena and perceive their significance beyond that conveyed by the surface characteristics of the phenomenal objects. Herein, however, lies a danger. In the early phase of the empathic relation the aim is to know and understand another person through grasping his or her givenness directly, unadulterated by ideas, preconceptions, private theories, or recollections of past associations. The knowledge we seek is direct knowledge and not inference from past experience. In direct physical contact, provided we sustain an attitude of openness and our non-manipulative approach, this is possible because of the nature of the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness. Once we trade in images we are inevitably drawn to make inferences since the patterns we "grasp" may be our own inventions rather than genuine experiences rooted in the nature of the phenomenal object as it confronts us, here and now. We may be deceived then in two entirely different ways. The other may be highly skilled in producing convincing expressive signs which convey a deliberately false impression to an observer (e.g. he does a good imitation of grief, or sickness, or incapacity, or sympathy in order to fool the observer); or the observer may be inept at "reading" the pattern of expressive signs even when they convey genuine messages and so falls back on inference from past experience. Thus the initial intuitive stage in personal knowing is clearly inadequate for getting to know and understand a person though equally clearly it is a necessary stage. Later when we come to examine various kinds of empathic relations we shall tackle this theme again. (12)

Getting to know persons as persons then is radically different from getting to know them as biological machines, or as organisms, or as psychophysical individuals. The study of these human objects leaves out of account actual lived experience which individuals undergo sometimes with pleasure, sometimes with pain. The experience of fear or joy or hope may well have physical correlates but from the point of view of the experiencing person a knowledge and understanding of the physical substrate adds nothing at all to his or her actual experience. Similarly scientific accounts of the psychological correlates of experience are remote from the livingness, the immediacy of experience. On the contrary such explanations tend to mystify most

people and to strike them as irrelevant to their feelings and sense of being-in-the-experience (which is also difficult to explain or even to describe).

Human beings in our society tend to resent being treated as objects as cogs in a machine, as a mere number among others, to be allocated to this or that position or task according to apparently arbitrary procedures. Most people feel that to be human is to be a centre of worth, of esteem, of autonomy, to be in charge of one's own affairs, in short to be a person. And what distinguishes one person from another is their personhood, that mark of personal identity, of individual personality which expresses moment by moment their own unique beingness. The beingness of persons is what we seek when we strive to know and understand another human individual as a person. Their beingness resides in their essential nature which makes them what they are and no other. Personal knowing is therefore not attainable by the methods used to study mechanisms, organisms, psychophysical individuals. It is my assertion that only through the empathic relation may one person know another as a person. What I am asserting here is that striving to know and understand another is to initiate the empathic relation; to initiate, however, is not enough. The relation must be cemented and sustained to count as empathic. Hence to strive for personal knowing is a necessary though not sufficient condition for empathising. How the empathic relation is finally achieved will become clearer as we proceed.

A discussion of alternative ways of knowing: scientific, aesthetic, practical, and so on, and their relation to personal knowing and hence to empathising must be deferred but here I must make it clear that I am not setting up a league table in which personal knowing always heads the list. All ways of knowing are valid as I have said but what will become clear in the sequel is that personal knowing has properties which prove to be essential for all forms of knowing. (13)

There are many situations in real life where two people enter a relation in which one of them does so unwillingly or at least grudgingly. There are also relations in which one member is, or is felt to

be, an authority: parent-child, teacher-student, doctor-patient. In these types of relation it may happen that a one-sided empathic relation is coaxed into life by one member, perhaps the willing or dominant participant, against the resistance of the other. This sometimes happens in psychotherapy and counselling despite the fact that the client has usually asked for the meeting. He or she may show hostility to, or resentment of, the therapist or counsellor initially. In a one-sided relationship it is not unusual for the hostile or resentful member to treat the other as an object, as a resource to be plundered, or wheedled into giving the advice or comfort the helpee thinks he or she wants. Nevertheless my claim is that so long as the empathising member(14) continues to treat his or her client as a person (the implications of which we shall study later(15)) the other's resentment may eventually give way to trust and hence to a more friendly, open approach to the empathising member.

Why should one person want to know and understand another? Human beings are interdependent. In the early years of childhood we are entirely dependent on caring adults or adult surrogates. Moreover we appear to be dependent on maternal love. Deprivation of either, but especially of love, has usually long-lasting, destructive effects. As the young child matures this dependency extends to others: peer group membership, teachers, friends. It is therefore a reasonable hypothesis that through a combination of nature and nurture other humans are essential for our sustained personal growth and that in normal healthy development we actually seek the company and reassurance of others. Such a hypothesis, however, does not suggest why we should want to know and understand others as persons rather than as mere providers of company and comfort. My claim is that in the process of differentiation of the infant into a self and other-than-self and in the subsequent development of the self into a person (i.e. the acquisition of personhood) the child's mother or mother substitute plays an essential role through her unconditional love for the child. She gives the child its sense of self-worth by treating it as an autonomous individual, by loving it unconditionally, by recognising, accepting and respecting its uniqueness without blame or resentment, without maudlin praise or fatuous adulation. Her love is honest and true as well as unconditional. In other words, the

mother or other caring adult creates the child's sense of personhood; the child therefore learns a way of treating others and responds by treating others in the same fashion.

Fromm analysed love into the four elements of respect, knowledge, responsibility and caring. Respect derives from the Latin "respicere" which means "to see, look at again". Respect therefore suggests a fresh vision of an object or person however familiar it may have become. It is thus the antithesis of stereotypy, of indifference bred of habit, of the bored recognition of the familiar. Knowledge refers to non-analytical cognition as well as to objective knowledge of the loved one. We strive to know whom we love, and to know and understand the loved one in depth. Responsibility Fromm interprets literally as a willingness and ability to respond appropriately to the loved one's physical and psychical needs. Caring is the active component: we strive to enhance the loved one, to concern ourselves with his or her life and growth. Personal knowing is an aspect of love which the child recognises from its experience with its mother. The trust and love engendered in the child initiates the same process in the reverse direction.

Two other factors are worth mentioning. The first is that all human beings have limitations even in maturity. We necessarily depend on others to sustain us despite our deficiencies. This, of course, can become a manipulative process, as we saw in the case of the client seeking therapy, but it does not inevitably lead to exploitation of the other. Moreover, it becomes important for us to know from whom to seek help. Seeking the aid of others in a non-manipulative way depends therefore on trying to know and understand others, on forging links with others whom one can trust.

The second factor centres on the importance of action in affirming our existence. In action we become conscious of our existence in a real world because action involves contact with the real world which in turn creates for us our experience of its resistance. The resistance of things in the real world sets the limits of what is the self and what is the other-than-self. The most important others are human beings who, of course, have their own intentions which frequently

differ greatly from our own. Thus resistance from human others (the only case we are considering just now) necessarily calls upon our skills in coping with other persons. Once again this can lead to manipulative behaviour but need not do so. Personal knowing is an alternative and the only one if we wish to know and understand these others as persons.

1.23 Empathy is a non-manipulative relation

In the preceding section we met some instances of potentially manipulative behaviour within a one-sided empathic relation. It seems obvious that empathising and manipulative behaviour cannot flourish in the same soil but it is instructive to explore the reasons why this must be so. The empathic relation focusses on the knowing and understanding of others as persons. Manipulative behaviour, on the other hand, treats others as objects. To manipulate or exploit another human being is to attempt to deny and even destroy his or her personhood. The other's intentions, beingness, self-esteem are of no consequence or interest to the manipulator except negatively in that they may present obstacles to his plans. Empathising and manipulative behaviour are thus mutually exclusive.

It can be argued that the accomplished manipulator in fact goes to great lengths to know and understand another the better to exploit his victim. This is an instance of pseudo-empathy; it differs from the genuine variety in that the manipulator does not respect the other, i.e. does not really perceive the person but only those attributes or qualities he wishes to exploit. He thus concerns himself with aspects of a psychophysical individual rather than the person; the former is an artifact of intellect and focusses on contingent properties of a person rather than on his or her essential nature. At best (or worst) the manipulator may achieve a limited personal knowledge and understanding sufficient for his purposes.

There are pathological cases (sadism, for example) in which personal knowing and understanding may be as thorough and complete as in the empathic relation. This too must count as pseudo-empathy since not only is the other's personhood destroyed (literally in extreme cases with the victim's death) but the other is treated as a possession of

the sadist for his or her personal pleasure. The victim's beingness is denied in order to satisfy the sadist's "having" approach to existence. Possession of his victim is essential to the sadist's sustained psychological well-being.

We might also consider the case of masochists who are apparently willing to enslave themselves in order to secure gratification of their sexual desires. For them punishment and actual physical suffering appear to be prized goals but from the perspective of this dissertation the important variable is the attendant craving for subjugation to the will of another. They could after all punish themselves but it is punishment by another that they seek. In this peculiar symbiotic relationship both partners appear to be at one. Each treats the other as a sexual object and in so doing tacitly agrees to be similarly regarded themselves. Neither can grasp the beingness of the other; both are blinded by the overpowering urge to have the other even at the expense of their own beingness. The sadist's destructive power over his or her willing submissive partner is exactly complemented by the masochist's self-destructiveness. Hence the masochist repays the sadist by destroying him; the masochist is an accomplice in the sadist's act and thereby reduces him to a non-person, a creature to be used, just as the victim is being used. In effect both are victims of each other's preference for the having mode of existence.

Finally we might mention here the role of empathising in hate. To hate is not the opposite or negation of loving. It is a positive act and shares the same elements as love with the exception of caring which is replaced by injuring or some equivalent action. Personal knowing and understanding is as important in the service of hate as it is in the pursuit of love. It is obvious that hate cannot feature in genuine empathising for the same reasons as those mentioned for the sadist; the end result, and its main aim, is to destroy the personal identity of the hated one, sometimes with the physical destruction of the individual.

Once again we see that personal knowing and understanding whilst necessary elements of the empathic relation are clearly not sufficient.

1.24 Personhood

Psychologists use the term "personality" in such a way that we cannot apply it to the characteristics of persons without conjuring up the panoply of traits, abilities, dispositions and so on which form the content of textbook descriptions of personality. I use the word personhood instead. It refers to the individual personality or personal identity of an individual, that which expresses his or her beingness or essential nature, that which marks a person as himself or herself and no other.

Personhood is expressed in every action, movement and gesture that a person makes; in every word he or she utters. When we experience the givenness of persons it is in their expressiveness that they are given to us. The whole person is given in the gesture; we do not, so to speak, collect fragments and somehow construct the whole person out of the bits. When people change their mood, or their interpersonal style, or their attitude, it is the whole person which changes. Persons come across to us all-of-a-piece. If they strike us as odd their oddness is in their whole being. A person perceived as a disintegrated entity signifies sickness, either in the perceiver or in the perceived. We might label someone as odd because he or she is afflicted with a mannerism or physical defect. In such an event we would be demonstrating our failure to grasp the other's givenness. The label is substituted for the person there before us.

In the empathic relation personhood is established and enhanced. How this comes about is explored in later sections. The point to note here is that even in the one-sided relation the empathising person is striving to know and understand the other and in acting with respect towards the other is also confirming and enhancing his or her own personhood. Every time one individual discovers similarities and differences with another he or she discovers some new facet of self. This is one of the meanings of resistance. I am not simply referring to Cooley's "looking glass" self which others reflect back to us. More importantly there is a confirmatory aspect to the delineation of self through the grasping of similarities and differences with others. The looking glass self is a passive entity compared with the self confirmed in the empathic relation. We can liken the empathic

relation to a proving ground where persons prove (i.e. test the validity of) their personhoods through the dynamic process of relating non-manipulatively to one another; i.e. through this process two selves may provide each other with similar opportunities for testing their personhoods in like manner, by empathising.

Some might argue that we can establish our identity in other, non-personal, ways. For example, mountaineers, solo sailors, people who build their own boats, those who perform bizarre deeds, are proving to themselves who they are, are establishing a convincing personal identity in the very activity itself. They are certainly asserting their individuality and in many cases declaring their separateness as well. It is sometimes difficult to see these activities as other than essentially self-centred concerns. Worthy though their enterprises may be in themselves, if they are really done in order to discover a personal identity (and the fact that people cite this as their main reason cannot be taken at face value; they may feel impelled to say something of the kind in self-justification; the truth may be that they do not know their reasons), then I suspect that the performers are compensating for some personal inadequacy or are trying to cover one up. There is nothing wrong in so behaving except perhaps the self-deception may have unsuspected consequences. It is characteristic of societies which favour the having mode of existence to provide the sort of climate in which the cult of individualism can prosper. The uninhibited dedication to self (even to the worship of self) is one of the attributes of a having mode of existence. Self is a possession to be revered and served like any other and who better to do this than the self aided, perhaps, by acolytes appointed by the self. This cosy self-contained world is a far cry from the creation and enhancement of personhood through the shared experience of joint action with another both of whom share a common goal or ideal. Persons are creations and natural members of communities of persons. Individuals "doing their own thing" have rejected community, at least for the time being, in favour of self. Whilst they may be testing something about themselves it is certainly not that personal identity which is established and enhanced in, and only in, the empathic relation.

1.25 Interpersonal harmony

In the empathic relation two persons come to realise the extent of their individual personalities; that is to say they perceive the extent to which they are alike yet different. What is genuinely foreign in each and which earlier in the relationship may have occasioned fear or resentment or misgiving is, in mutual empathy at least, either understood and so no longer seen as justifying these negative feelings; or is perceived and accepted, at any rate for the moment, as one of the unfathomable aspects of life but not on that account to be feared. Such are the irreducible differences which mark the separate individual personalities (personhoods) which characterise the beingness of each member of the relation.

Outside the empathic relation, in contrast, irreducible differences (and differences in general) frequently lead to conflict. Much of the impetus behind social skills training and the human relations movement issues from the need to cope with conflict especially in conditions of rapid change where individuals often experience distress of one kind or another which in turn leads to negative reactions aimed at resisting or interfering with the proposed or actual change. Conflict is often inevitable because typically persons are treated as objects to be manipulated in order to satisfy the requirements of someone's new conception of things, e.g. a new method of production, a new work roster, a more efficient way of doing things.

In human affairs differences are inevitable and so are disagreements. Both spring from differences in individual biographies. Some differences and disagreements are likely to be irreconcilable for the same reason. What is not inevitable is aggressive conflict. If differences and disagreements were accepted as part of life, without loss to the persons concerned, no aggression could arise. Therein lies the difficulty. A competitive society that emphasises a having mode of existence virtually forces its members to adopt this mode. In such a climate it is difficult (and would certainly be unusual) to foster empathic relations between, say, management and workers, or between leaders and subordinates. It is precisely in these com-

petitive dyadic groups, where differences and disagreements are likely to arise in a context which is essentially person destroying, that decisions are bound to lead to aggressive conflict. Yet there are societies where differences and disagreements do not lead to aggression; they are simply accepted as part of life. Respect for persons takes precedence over material or other gain. Alternative ways of achieving objectives are sought without ill-feeling or ill-will or condemnation of the dissenting others. Live and let live may sound trite to our sophisticated ears yet such is the essence of interpersonal harmony bred of the empathic relation. It is not a weak, indecisive, peace-at-any-price state of affairs but a positive, person-enhancing and group-enhancing outcome.

Whilst interpersonal harmony cannot be said to be achievement-orientated neither does it preclude, hinder or denigrate achievement. In the empathic relation cooperative action is the only possible action; whatever the members of the empathic relation choose to do will be done just because they chose, in empathy, to do it. The chances of developing and sustaining an empathic relation in a competitive society like ours seem slim yet the alternative seems even worse. Confrontation cannot be manipulated out of existence though specific aggressive conflicts can be doctored in an extemporising fashion; however, the facts of modern industrial life must speak for themselves. Quarrels simply breed other quarrels and so on *ad infinitum*. This theme will be taken up again later when we consider the power relation(16) founded on divisiveness in contrast to the empathic relation founded on separateness within unity. Both recognise and respond to interpersonal variations but with totally different consequences. The power relation tends to destroy persons whereas the empathic relation tends to create them.

Intergroup relations are not necessarily improved through intragroup empathising. Consider two neighbouring groups. In each the members enter into empathic relations with one another as a matter of choice. They shun all manipulative practices, engage in cooperative action and pursue common ideals. Both groups value personhood and actively foster person-enhancing strategies in normal everyday affairs and relationships. Both groups promote a being mode of exist-

ence; competition, materialism, status-consciousness are alien to their outlook and way of life. Let us imagine two such groups; it is easy to imagine that the common ideals of group A are in complete opposition to those of group B and that if the two groups meet, say to negotiate over certain territorial claims or over an accidental injury inflicted on a member, they might react negatively towards one another. There is nothing about the empathic relation that automatically ensures that non-group members are treated as persons in the same way as group members. For individuals to be able to transcend the powerful bonds of group solidarity (all the stronger perhaps for being forged in empathising) they must make a special effort that may not be in their power to summon up.

This particular issue shows up another aspect of the empathic relation; it does not have a unique claim to virtue. What one group reveres as a common ideal may be judged by another as immoral.

1.26 Having and being

A recent and detailed comparative study of having and being is to be found in Fromm's "To Have or To Be". For my purposes I wish only to draw attention to the relationship between modes of existence and predispositions towards experience and the objects of experience. Fromm's spirited and strongly individualistic socialist beliefs tend on the whole to enhance rather than detract from his critical analysis.

Fromm expresses his view of having thus:

The nature of the having mode of existence follows from the nature of private property. In this mode of existence all that matters is my acquisition of property and my unlimited right to keep what I have acquired. The having mode excludes others; it does not require any further effort on my part to keep my property or to make productive use of it. The Buddha has described this mode of life as craving, the Jewish and Christian religions as coveting; it transforms everybody into something dead and subject to another's power. (33)

In the having mode there is no live relation between me and what I have. It and I have become things, and I have it, because I have the force to make it mine. But there is also a reverse relationship: it has me, because my sense of identity, i.e. of sanity, rests upon my having it (and as many things as possible)...The having mode of existence...makes things of both object and subject. The relationship is one of deadness, not aliveness. (34)

Those who favour or prefer or cling to the having mode of existence tend towards exclusiveness, possessiveness, and therefore, either by deliberate act or by default, deprive others of that which the former crave or want. Worse, perhaps, is the seemingly inevitable consequence of the separateness implicit in the having mode: the distancing of the living self from both the phenomenal world and the self's experience of it.

This state of affairs is not at all the same as the objective stance advocated by the scientific approach to knowledge acquisition. To adopt an over-against stance does not imply that the scientist abandons or forgets his or her aliveness but rather temporarily suppresses the impact of this quality in order to arrive at objective knowledge and understanding of phenomena as objects *per se* regardless of the scientist's own personal feelings about them. On the other hand if knowledge and understanding thus acquired are used to control some aspects or elements of the world (especially other human beings) scientists may well drift into or positively adopt a having mode of existence insofar as their quest for knowledge overrides any concern they may have felt for the consequences of their activities. Here I am asserting that the over-against stance of science does not of itself imply a search for or a deliberate use of control to the detriment of the other whether the latter be human or non-human. The "how" of science cannot be divorced from the "why" of scientists as human beings. The "how" resides in the world of procedures, methods, rules for observing, classifying, and so on. The "why" is only intelligible in terms of human motives. Motives, however, include reasons which might be construed as intellectual justifications for action. The problem is that these mental gymnastics do not always coincide with deeper, sometimes less creditable, motives. The quest for knowledge springs from human motives but motives are not "neutral". Working on problems of nuclear defence, for example, may quite easily confuse in a particular scientist's mind his or her intellectual reasons and such deeper motives as he or she is aware of or might reasonably guess at. This line of argument raises the question: does knowledge ever diminish the seeker irrespective of its possible effect on the quality of life of others? Some might

justifiably ask whether pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is always a good thing though this raises at least one other question: what does good mean here? It seems to me that to want to own knowledge is inseparable from the desire to control it and hence to exercise power over others who lack this knowledge and to the extent that they lack it. Control over others diminishes human potential and both controller and controlled are thereby inhibited in terms of personal growth. Stewart(35) expresses much the same anxiety in his comparison of having with being had. To be in the grip of the kind of having I am referring to here is also to be had. There can be no let-up in the effort expended to maintain control over the other regardless of the particular form that control may take. The scientist who seeks knowledge and understanding in order to have power over some aspect of the world is surely adopting a having mode of existence. If it be objected that control over disease or physical obstacles to human happiness cannot be equated with ill-will towards human beings or other living creatures I would readily agree but would nevertheless question the scientist's motives in order to test the implied altruism of his or her actions. A thorough-going analysis of the relationship between control and having would be worthwhile but cannot be pursued here.

Being is a rather more complex notion since in English the verb "to be" performs a number of distinctly different functions. Hence the word "being" in questions such as "What is being?" leads to a philosophical debate which is as old and as contentious and unresolved as the problem of time. For my purposes I concentrate on the notion of being which contains within it notions of process, activity, movement. The being mode of existence is one in which the person is at one, so to speak, with his or her own experience for its own sake. It acknowledges the value of the intentional object of experience but it also recognises the intrinsic worth of the experience itself.

To be in one's experience requires a degree of selflessness. That is to say we have temporarily to forget ourselves, to lay aside concern with our desires, interests, even our knowledge about the world. Instead we seek union with the world as it fills our consciousness moment by moment. The intentional object giving rise to our experi-

ence is valued for itself and so is allowed to be itself, not through a gracious act of condescension but through a positive act of love (or respect as Fromm would say, at least initially). Where the having stance reduces both haver and had to objects the being mode enhances through the gift of love (or minimally, respect) the worth of both self and other. Fromm quotes Hunzinger:

A blue glass appears to be blue when light shines through it because it absorbs all other colours and thus does not let them pass. That is to say, we call a glass "blue" precisely because it does not retain the blue waves. It is named not for what it possesses but for what it gives out.(36)

Thus for Fromm having is, by definition self- and other-limiting; being in contrast is self- and other-enhancing. The image here is one of selfless giving or love which enhances both the recipient and the donor by strengthening the bond between them. Being refers to "the mode of existence in which one neither has anything nor craves to have something, but is joyous, employs one's faculties productively, is *oned* to the world."(37)

Fromm makes an interesting comparison between change in language use and the emphasis on having and being.

A certain change in the emphasis on having and being is apparent in the growing use of nouns and the decreasing use of verbs in western languages in the past few centuries.

A noun is the proper denotation for a thing. I can say that I have things: for instance that I have a table, a house, a book, a car. The proper denotation for an activity, a process is a verb: for instance I am, I love, I desire, I hate, etc. Yet evermore frequently an activity is expressed in terms of *having*; that is, a noun is used instead of a verb. But to express an activity by *to have* in connection with a noun is an erroneous use of language because processes and activities cannot be possessed; they can only be experienced.(38)

As I hold that personal knowing is a central feature of the empathic relation Fromm's comments on language use are especially interesting. In the prologue I have clearly borrowed his ideas in my discussion of the prevalence of nouns in the social sciences. Later on he adds: "Optimum knowledge in the being mode is *to know more deeply*. In the having mode it is *to have more knowledge*."(39)

For Fromm this change in language use indicates a high degree of alienation. Feelings of anxiety, stress or, on the positive side, happiness, excitement are transformed into possessions. "I have a problem" replaces "I worry over X". One cannot possess an abstract-

ion. On the contrary one might say with greater truth that the problem has me in its grip. It owns me. Thus I am not only distanced from my experience; I am also alienated from my experiencing self. Genuine authentic feelings have given way to an obscure sense of loss, of almost pathological detachment. In *extremis*, fortunately rare even in our frenetic, having-dominated society, psychopathology takes over.

1.27 The exploration in empathy of similarities and differences

In the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness we grasp how alike yet how different from the other we are. In this initial, intuitive perceptual act our grasping of the other's foreignness can be disturbing; in contrast, our apprehension of similarities provides the impetus to move towards the other. In what senses are we to understand similarity and difference?

The referent is the person or rather the individual personality (the personhood) which expresses the unique beingness of each of the participants. Insofar as physical characteristics are deeply embedded in the self-image they will impinge upon our sense of personhood. If I have a wart on the end of my nose I may spontaneously identify with another who is cross-eyed, because in grasping the unfortunate's givenness I sense in him or her perhaps the same lack of confidence, or feeling of rejection, or belittling by insensitive others, that I myself have experienced on account of my own deformity. The similarity lies not in the presence of a physical blemish but in its effect on our self-image; we suffer similarly in our diminished sense of self-worth. Physical characteristics in and for themselves are hardly ever important elements in our experience of similarity with another. There is some evidence, however, to suggest that physical differences may make interpersonal exchange difficult. For example, the healthy do not always know how to cope with the sick (who sometimes resent the healthy), the whole with the crippled, the robust and physically large with the weak and physically puny, the capable (adept) with the incapable (clumsy), the members of one ethnic group with those of another.

It is never easy to isolate the perception of purely physical differences from the perception of feelings attributable to them as the phenomena of prejudice and stereotypy demonstrate. There appears to be a tendency for people to feel more relaxed with each other just because they resemble each other in some important respect, perhaps for no better reason (nor worse for that matter) than that they share a set of coping strategies which are more readily available to them than might be the case with those different from themselves.

Age differences offer an obvious example. The young tend to see the older generation as out of touch, square, addicted to rules, conformist, authoritarian, and afflicted with delusions of superior knowledge, understanding and wisdom. The members of older age groups tend to regard the young as feckless, ill-disciplined, short-sighted hedonistic, and easily seduced by the rhetoric of every tub-thumping demagogue who comes their way. (This collection of stereotypes merely serves to indicate a range of attitudes actually encountered in the world; fortunately many individuals cope with age differences without resorting to such generalisations.)

Sex differences appear to present a difficulty for the account of empathising presented in this dissertation. The majority of men and women tend to seek the company of others of the same sex just as much as those of the opposite sex. However in the matter of choice of partner for sexual relationships what counts is not our response as an organism (heterosexual choice is the biologically natural one) but our spontaneous feeling of attraction (or its opposite) for another. The other may arouse physical desire, possibly unknowingly. Sexual desire is part of our physical nature but its arousal owes more to social conditioning than to in-built mechanisms such as hypothesised instincts. Some modern societies provide a surfeit of titillation, at least for men, and much advertising reflects the current standards of male and female beauty, elegance and desirability. Indeed the media as a whole repeatedly and variously establish the criteria for masculinity and femininity and the socially acceptable implications of the meeting of the sexes. However, once we have disposed of desire the reasons for two people being attracted to one another will centre on similarity in other, less evanescent, qualit-

ies. Within an empathic relation mere physical characteristics play little part in any case as I have tried to show in my example of physical defects.

What are the elements of individual personalities which are likely to inspire in a person the intuitive recognition of similarity with another? We might rephrase the question to include the expressiveness of another for it is the other's expressiveness which is given to us in the spontaneous perceptual act. The other's feelings, attitudes, emotions, habits, coping strategies, persistent tendencies of character, are among the phenomena which we might discover in the other's givenness. The detailed study of these would amount to a review of current psychological thought and research on individual differences but here I shall concentrate on a few issues important to the understanding of the empathic relation.

Feelings and emotions are obviously easier to recognise than any of the others; they make a direct impact and are virtually independent of time and space. We do not need contextual clues to tell us of another's pain or pleasure, nor of the emotions behind the feelings. Joy, grief, happiness, anguish, anger, contentment are immediately identifiable even if we cannot perceive their source, their immediate cause. Neither do we need time to be sure of the correctness of our perception. The other's display of emotion, or expression of pain or pleasure, is immediate and instantly grasped at the moment of its occurrence. Of course we may be deceived if the other is highly skilled in dissembling and convincingly expresses a false emotion, or if the observer is unskilled in reading the other's expressiveness. There are many ways of giving vent to feelings and emotions and sometimes perhaps only the context can help us to discriminate between signs which look similar. For example, we might mistake a person's anger for fear or even hatred if we relied solely on the physical expression of his or her emotion; a sensitive perception of the context would help to obviate error. This is particularly true when experiencing the givenness of persons whose cultural origins and traditions are greatly different from our own.

Similarity in the case of feelings and emotions may refer either to the emotions and feelings themselves (even if stimulated by different objects), or to the expressive signs which betray their presence, or any combination of these. We might therefore infer that the greater our experience of life the greater the range of potential similarities between self and other which the empathiser might perceive in the other's givenness. The ability to read the expressiveness of others, whilst innate, is greatly aided by learning.(17)

To the extent that attitudes have an affective component the spontaneous experience of the givenness of the other's emotions and feelings give pointers to the other's attitudes. The full flavour of an attitude and an accurate knowledge and understanding of another's attitude systems are acquired over a period of time and in a variety of contexts. Though we may sense an attitude in our first encounter with the other we have to be on our guard against too hasty a judgement. In the empathic relation the spirit of openness, respect and goodwill and the non-manipulative, non-attributive interaction with the other help to prevent or inhibit this tendency. The interesting feature of attitudes from the point of view of the empathic relation is not so much the beliefs, feelings and action tendencies which, as it were, collectively express the attitude, but rather the social object to which they refer. The object of an attitude may be anything at all: a political party, a particular food, a human being, a domain of knowledge, an abstract idea, a generalised other. Since in empathising we strive to know and understand another as a person we will inevitably find ourselves exploring the other's social objects and the ways in which the other construes them to yield the attitude systems which accommodate his or her construals and which we may eventually come to know and understand. The range of possible similarities in the case of attitudes is extensive. It includes the social object itself, its functional or other relevance in our lives, the ways of construing the object as well as the beliefs, values, feelings and dispositions to act which we attach to it. All require time and contextual variety for their proper and adequate appreciation.

Habits are automatic routines which we unconsciously bring into action more or less independently of context but which nevertheless appear to fulfill an essential function. The problem with habits is discovering what function they serve. Sometimes they are useful as in skilled performance where actions are executed without, or with only the minimum, conscious control. The performer is thus able to attend to a wider perceptual field which may, for many skills, be vital for safety as well as for efficiency. Many habits appear to serve no purpose that one can readily see; they may even be dysfunctional; we feel that the individual would be better off without them. Examples include the resort to linguistic cliches and formulae, addictive behaviour, stereotyped responses to specific objects or classes of objects, obsessive or compulsive behaviour, dismissive coping strategies and, in general, "useless" repetitive responses. In the empathic relation we may perceive similarities with the other's specific habit (e.g. chain smoking) or with the addiction which it signifies (e.g. I am dependent on smoking, he on alcohol); with stereotypy towards an object or class of objects (we both dislike dogs) or with a general inclination towards stereotypy (he hates foreigners whereas I detest ideologies). Or the empathiser perceives that his or her own habits serve a similar function to the other's habits, perhaps despite their different character. In the case of attitudes, the initial intuitive grasping of the other's givenness may suggest that a particular expressiveness indicates a habitual response but only time and contextual variety will enable us to confirm this. And only time and contextual variety will allow the empathiser to know and understand the significance of the other's habits as elements of his or her individual personality.

Emotions, feelings, attitudes, habits are indicators of a person's beingness and may reflect something of the quality of his or her life style. In studying the other's coping strategies and persistent predispositions of character we approach closer to the essence of the person. It is doubtful whether any human being could, over a lengthy period of time, suppress all signs of feeling or emotion, root out all redundant habits, and control attitudes at least to the extent of concealing them as much as possible. Over a short period

of time, however, such self-discipline may be within the capability of a reasonably well-adjusted and very determined person. With coping strategies and persistent predispositions of character no such whittling away is possible nor can be imagined. Every action is the fulfilment of an intention and involves choice and therefore value. If the action involves other people then conflict may arise either because the purposes of the self are at variance with those of others and a power struggle ensues; or the individual may give way thus shifting the conflict to within himself or herself with possible damage to the person's self-esteem. Therefore by the nature of action itself a person develops coping strategies, not consciously (at least not in the beginning) but unconsciously or perhaps pre-consciously, by discovering or inventing on the spur of the moment a *modus vivendi* which maintains as far as possible a stable order as seen from his or her point of view. One view of racial prejudice, for example, describes the prejudiced individual as someone who off-loads his or her frustrations, feelings of inadequacy, negative self-image, on to another (Jew, black, communist, capitalist, etc.) in order to create a tangible external object to hate and attack and thus establish some kind of internal equilibrium. Such an individual will tend to use this coping strategy in a wide variety of situations and with many different social objects. This example also shows how an individual's persistent predispositions of character might become obvious to an observer. It may be that individuals who feel threatened by change in the outside world will reveal an abiding predisposition to act in rigid, black-and-white ways towards any deviations in their self-limiting, regimented world. Or it might show that prejudiced people tend to have fewer categories than others for distinguishing elements in their world (e.g. all foreigners are shifty). The relation between persistent predispositions of character and coping strategies appears to be very close and both appear to form psychodynamic elements in individual life histories.

I have taken prejudice as an example but I could as easily have used a more intellectual element as my starting point. People whose major interests in life centre on intellectual activity, or on the aesthetic response to the real world, or on a particular world view, are

as likely to be drawn to one another as are those whose particular hang-ups induce them to seek soul-mates by joining the same hate-clubs.

It is interesting to speculate why any kind of association appeals so strongly to humankind regardless of the specific grounds for its formation. There are various explanations for this phenomenon. We all have limited capabilities and we depend on others for much of our well-being. Some argue that parental upbringing guarantees continued dependency throughout life but some societies who treat their children with as much consideration as they give their adult members appear not to produce this dependency relation in their offspring. Dependency is certainly learned but so is independence. The dependence-independence dimension does not offer as strong a leverage for our ideas on mutual attraction as the normal process of child care. The loving relation between child and caring adult where it exists (as it seems to do in the majority of families) creates a warmth and a sense of personal identity that we naturally seek in later life. The ideal ambience for child growth is the empathic relation, especially with the mother but increasingly nowadays with other caring adults, in which unity and separateness are experienced simultaneously. Thus do we discover our personhood. The combination of love and personhood, both products of a community of persons (the child and caring adult), provides the irresistible standard for all relations in later life and against which all but the empathic relation pale into comparative insignificance.

Nevertheless, we cannot deny that we are all dependent on others for a variety of reasons. We all have weaknesses; we all have limitations. Whilst I might not wish to go so far as to say that we need others, I do think that we severely limit our personal growth by confusing concern over our autonomy with a healthy and often necessary dependency relation (the positive aspect of dominance), and a consequent tendency to avoid or fear it.

Additional comments on perceived differences are to be found in section 1.426.

1.28 Summary

Empathy, then, is a particular kind of relation between a self and an other-than-self in which the members experience a sense of unity but without loss of their separate identities. It is an active relation (and not merely a state of being) in which the members strive to know and understand one another, perceive each other's existential nature, respect each other and join in an action which centres on the pursuit of a shared goal or common ideal. The relation is non-manipulative and leads to self- and other-enhancement, interpersonal harmony and a preference for a being rather than a having mode of existence.

The six characteristics reviewed briefly in the preceding sections distinguish the empathic from all other relations between a self and an other-than-self. It will be apparent from the account so far that only persons can initiate an empathic relation and that therefore only persons can create persons. Both observations will be studied more closely in section 1.4.

1.3 SOME POPULAR VIEWS OF EMPATHY

Some see empathy as a kind of telepathic communication in which one individual somehow knows what another is thinking and feeling even when the other is not physically present; monozygotic twins seem especially prone to this experience. Whether or not telepathy is a genuine phenomenon is still open to doubt though that does not justify excluding it from proper investigation. However, telepathy and kindred mystical phenomena do not feature in this enquiry. The potentially more freely accessible empathic relation provides a more easily verifiable process and a less contentious explanation of some of the peculiarities of those who claim to be particularly sensitive perceivers of others.

Another popular view of empathy likens it to an emotional tuning device. It seems that those who possess this gift are able to establish a wordless rapport with another in which both partners feel that they share the same "wavelength". This differs from telepathy

firstly because each must be physically present to the other and secondly because the experience is not usually felt to be mystical though some regard it as a throwback to our primitive past. The view of the empathic relation presented here can certainly accommodate this sensitive rapport but without employing the jargon of emotional subliminal perception. I shall also suggest that its rarity is due to the atrophying effect of our chosen life style; it can be rescued and revived with a little effort.

Yet another popular view sees empathy as a rare gift like artistic or musical talent. I say more about this in Chapter 3 where I consider the appropriateness of the ability approach to understanding the empathic relation. My view of this relation does not preclude the virtual certainty that it will prosper if the participants bring to it, among other qualities which I shall explore in due course, some cognitive and productive resources (which we call abilities, capacities or competencies) and some minimum level of performance. The systematic analysis of these abilities and skills goes far beyond the scope of this dissertation. Once again the feeling of rarity and preciousness is more descriptive of our way of life than of ourselves as persons, as the sequel will try to show.

Contrary to the opinion of some professional commentators empathy is not another word for sympathy; the two are conceptually and phenomenologically different. In the next chapter I will examine some of the many ways in which one human being may forge a bond with another. Sympathy, empathy, identification, community of feeling, emotional contagion, emotional unity are just a few which have caught the imagination of philosophers, social and developmental psychologists, sociologists, and social anthropologists. As Chapter 3 shows not all students of "empathy" use this particular label or, if they do, understand by it the same phenomenon.

It is not to be confused with what one might call an "aesthetic" response. We may thrill to a gorgeous sunset, or to a particularly brilliant performance of a musical work, or enjoy a moment of great personal peace and contentment in the presence of an awesome work of nature but these moving aesthetic experiences are not necessarily a

function of an empathic or quasi-empathic relation. On the other hand they may be but if so will be experienced differently, more positively, less in the sense of wallowing in an emotional bath. This last condition is superficial and lacks many of the most important attributes of genuine empathy. These and similar matters will be dealt with in Chapter 2.

1.4 TYPES OF EMPATHIC RELATION

In the cases considered so far we have assumed that two members formed the empathic relation. Is there a maximum number? If we imagine that all members simultaneously enter such a relation clearly there must be a limit since sustained face-to-face contact soon breaks down once the group reaches a certain size. Small group research into the properties of so-called "psychological" groups (whose members pursue a common goal or task and maintain face-to-face contact) suggests that, though task and other variables affect the maximum group size, the latter seems to vary between five and eight. We might assume a similar maximum for the empathic relation.

There is no need, however, to require simultaneous or even sustained membership of an empathic relation. Members can move into and out of the relation at will. As I have suggested above and will explore more fully later the empathic relation is the natural one between persons. A community of persons conducts its business through the empathic relation which implies that members of the community will in the normal course of daily life associate spontaneously in many different groups which will vary in size, purpose, duration and so on.

1.41 The idea of defect and limitation

The central feature of the empathic relation is the creation of persons. At least one must exist to initiate the relation. In any group of individuals in our kind of society there will be some who prefer the having mode of life and who tend towards manipulative, exploitative and judgemental conduct in their dealings with others. They may have learned their self- and other-limiting ways from their par-

ents, from members of one or more of the many microcultures they move about in, or they may seldom have been treated as persons themselves during their early upbringing. Yet there will also be others in the group who have experienced some aspects of the being mode of existence and have therefore enjoyed the benefits it confers, chief among which is their recognition by others as persons. Many members of this hypothetical group will have experienced both modes, perhaps the majority.

When a person tries to initiate the empathic relation with another individual the response is unpredictable. At best it would be wise to expect little better than a neutral disposition towards the empathiser. By neutral I do not mean indifferent which implies a negative attitude but rather a state which is neither well-disposed nor ill-disposed, a genuinely uncommitted attitude towards the person initiating the empathic relation.

The question of limiting conduct and, more generally, of a limiting approach to the world including the self is problematical. Defective conduct is sometimes obvious. The alcoholic, the drug addict, the pathological gambler or liar or thief, may be well aware of his or her problem and desperately want to do something about it but for a variety of reasons cannot do so. At a more prosaic level many people feel able to own up to their inadequacies (or some of them) and to do so quite objectively; an inability to deal with certain kinds of people, or to cope with certain kinds of task or situation are commonplace. The problem is overcoming the handicap. Their own efforts may fail to achieve results despite, and possibly because of, the exhortations and "good" advice so freely available and often so generously given. If such individuals should chance to meet someone who is able to enter into an empathic relation with them they might find the kind of help they apparently need to start them on their own journey of personal growth and so overcome their self-limiting ways of living. How the empathic relation can promote this self-enhancement non-manipulatively is the purpose of the next few sections but first we must consider other cases of defect, those in which the individual appears to be unable or unwilling to admit to conduct which not only hinders his own personal development but may

also limit others in some way. A teacher may notice that a student is making poor progress because of faulty study methods. In such a case the teacher might suggest other ways of studying and even train the student in their use. If the student is highly motivated to learn whatever task the teacher presents he or she will probably give these new methods a try. They may work or they may not. Either way both teacher and student feel able to explore willingly better study methods (i.e. more effective ways for this particular student). An empathic relation need play no part in this process though it would certainly facilitate the development of teacher-student relations in other directions beyond the specific problem of study habits. However, suppose the student does not want to learn. The teacher might rightly feel that this attitude is self-limiting but the student may not share this view or even care about it. A substantial minority of students in secondary education, and nowadays increasingly in post-compulsory education, appear to have acquired unhelpful approaches to learning. Here the problem is not so much overcoming the inadequacy as convincing the student that a problem exists or, perhaps more precisely, what the problem is. In this case it matters who defines the problem and who decides the criteria by which it is defined. At one extreme, for example, the student might with justice say that there is no point in learning what the teacher offers because it will not be of any practical use either for getting a job (there are none to be had and to further dramatise the situation imagine the student to be black, female and a political activist) or for filling his or her (enforced) leisure time. This bleak and somewhat contrived picture does in fact correspond, with suitable variations, to the reality of many of those who are usually described as our less academically able students. In such circumstances does the teacher accept the student's criteria? To do otherwise is to impose his or her own view of learning, education, personal growth on the student. Or does the teacher try to convince the student of the self-limiting character of his or her negative approach? If so, how is the teacher to do this in the context of a curriculum over which he or she may have no control?

There are many dilemmas of this kind where one individual not only feels that another is acting in self-limiting ways but he or she is

unwilling to stand by and do nothing to remedy what appears to the observer as an addiction to "defective" conduct (and equally "defective" attitudes) all the worse perhaps for being self-imposed. In such cases "defect" is synonymous with self-limiting conduct or rather what is felt to constitute a self-imposed limit on the potential for personal growth of the individual observed. The dilemma is partly a moral one. What right has anyone, however well-meaning, to interfere in the choices of another? On what grounds may one justly and with propriety intervene in another's life even when it appears to be for the other's good? Not all interference or intervention is manipulative or exploitative. Indeed I maintain that in an empathic relation intervention can be other- and self-enhancing; that is to say it is possible to enhance the other's personhood as well as one's own by intervening provided it is done within the security and warmth of the empathic relation. However, the problem of deciding what is or is not self-limiting remains, but this too is sufficient justification for trying to enter into an empathic relation with a "defective" person quite apart from intervening, that is doing something concrete about it. Since the empathic relation is non-manipulative there is no question of "doing good even if it hurts".

Let us leave this question and look at the empathic relation under different conditions. As and when necessary we can return to this theme and reappraise the position we have reached. We can arrange a hierarchy of empathic relations ranging from the ideal (mutual empathy) to the least promising. Typical members include:

- (a) two or more people all of whom are well-disposed to each other (the ideal case);
- (b) two or more people one of whom (the initiator) is at least well-disposed towards the other(s) and none is hostile; (they may be only neutral towards other members);
- (c) two or more people at least one of whom (the initiator) is well-disposed towards the other(s) and at least one is hostile;
- (d) two or more people all of whom are neutral to each other (i.e. none is either well- or ill-disposed to the other(s);
- (e) two or more people one of whom is neutral and at least one is hostile.

The groups in types (d) and (e) may never generate an empathic relation. By definition persons cannot be neutral; they are well-dispos-

ed to others including hostiles. The neutral cases are included here to raise the question as to whether a person not at his or her best can in certain circumstances initiate the empathic relation. With the possible exception of pathological cases all individuals, even in our having-dominated society, have experienced, however fleetingly, the nurturance and enhancement of their personhood especially in childhood at the hands of their mothers or other caring adults. We might further conjecture that all human beings actively seek or at least yearn for the fostering of their individual personality, for fulfilment in a community of persons, and that, despite the pressures of industrialised societies, individuals will, given half a chance, discover ways of reaching these goals or strive to do so.

Trying is the cornerstone of the empathic relation; good trying or goodwill. Another way of looking at this hierarchy of actual or potential empathic relations is to construe them as demonstrations of actual or potential goodwill contending with increasing illwill as we move down the list. Crudely, the sum of goodwill diminishes from (a) to (e) but is never entirely absent at least *in potentia* (e.g. in those whose feelings towards others are neutral). In the following sections I shall examine types (a), (c) and (e). I shall assume only two members in each case.

1.42 Mutual empathy

The empathic relation does not come into existence fully-fledged nor does it instantly produce its effects. It involves a process in which the members interact over a period of time which can be considerable. In the ideal case where the participants are well-disposed towards each other the conditions are at their most favourable and the time span of development of the empathic relation may be short.

A precursor of empathy is an attitude of openness to the beingness of the other, a state of preparedness for the other's givenness, a sensitivity to, and a willingness to grasp, the existential nature of the other. The stance of openness is a necessary condition for the evolution of the empathic relation. From it stem two of the active elements of the relation: respect for the other and goodwill.

1.421 Openness

Openness refers to a receptivity to the beingness of things. It therefore implies a laying aside of existing knowledge, preconceived ideas, perceptual set, vested interest, conceptual categories and the attendant labelling, and similar cognitive and affective material of everyday life. This is not easy to do but can be encouraged with the help of techniques used to activate creative thinking. It is not a matter of trying to grasp the essence of whatever confronts us: too much effort is likely to induce the very intrusions that we want to hold at bay. Rather it is a case of relaxing our perceptual grip on phenomena in order to allow them to speak for themselves. Contemplation and meditation are similarly unlikely to be effective because they tend to be too directive and in any case they are often contaminated with mystery, mysticism or magic. If we could recapture the innocent curious wonder which we brought to the phenomenal world in our infancy and early childhood we would be in the right frame of mind.

A major obstacle to rediscovering our lost attitude of openness is the depth and nature of our personal commitment to our perceptual habits. The familiar is safe; accumulated experience and knowledge have served us well. To perceive anew is threatening; it exposes us to the risk of confronting our limitations. It poses problems of perhaps having to reorganise and reassess what we already know. We may even have to reappraise whole areas of our lives. In any case the new can itself be threatening not merely because it upsets the established order of our lives but because we may not know how to handle it or be sure where it will lead. Doubt and uncertainty are uncomfortable experiences for many, perhaps most of us. So our own defensive strategies may oppose any attempt to adopt a stance of openness; they may even inhibit it altogether. It seems important therefore to pay as much attention to discovering and dealing with our defensiveness as we do to applying specific techniques to freeing our perceptual "style" from its stanglehold. It may sometimes be necessary to seek help but not from psychotherapists unless they have an established reputation for empathising. Better choices would include those whose perceptual gifts are well developed: artists,

poets and those known to enter readily into empathic relations with others. Carl Rogers' idea of psychological safety is relevant here. In the empathic relation the empathiser offers psychological safety by the very fact of trying to know and understand another non-manipulatively. The empathising person never ridicules or threatens or lays any blame on the other in the latter's efforts to learn new coping strategies or to acquire the attitude of openness (perhaps, for example, by experimenting with some of the creative thinking techniques) in the course of which the other may make "mistakes", look or feel foolish, or become defensively aggressive.

1.422 The non-manipulative attitude

The non-manipulative attitude refers to a person's unconditional recognition and acceptance of the human, non-human, or non-living being in front of him or her. All things are held to have a right to their independent existence; nothing, with the possible exception of human artifacts, is thought to exist solely for its possible contribution to human well-being. The non-manipulative attitude rejects the exploitative, instrumental, egocentric approach to the world. It encourages a willingness to see other living and non-living things as rightfully there, owing nothing to the gracious consent of human beings to continue existing. It acknowledges and freely accepts the right of all living things to continue to live; of the inanimate world to be used with consideration for the needs of other living things especially other human beings. It condemns unbridled spoliation of the environment merely to satisfy human wants; it rejects the abuse of other living things in order to supply human needs.

Where human artifacts are concerned the non-manipulative attitude has similar characteristics but other factors have to be considered. Crafts people have a high regard for their tools, their correct use and care. Skilled performance is universally admired as are the products of skilled work. Human beings have developed an aesthetic of artifacts such as houses, instruments, machines, cities, simple tools and other useful devices. This aesthetic includes an appreciation of correct or appropriate use. On the other hand there are products of human hands which do not win universal approval: weapons of destruction, mechanisms designed to harm others. It is difficult

to adopt an unconditional recognition and acceptance of such artifacts although it does seem to be an essential precondition for using them effectively. A man is unlikely to become a good marksman and so be able to guarantee killing his enemy if he is afraid of his rifle. To overcome his fear he must approach his weapon with that very attitude which it is designed to destroy in himself.

The non-manipulative attitude does not inhibit the use of objects nor is it meant to. What it inhibits is the *exploitation* of objects, their misuse or abuse that affects, directly or indirectly, the well-being of others especially other humans. For example, it is a personal choice whether an individual eats meat or not. To do so does not necessarily imply the exploitation of animals. Battery farming methods, however, are exploitative just because the reason for this method of food production is not to provide food but to produce for the sake of producing in order to earn greater profits. A high rate of production and a continuing flow of profit are maintained by encouraging more consumption through the usual channels of socialisation. I have chosen an emotive topic but the same remarks apply regardless of what is produced for consumption (which is practically everything).

The non-manipulative attitude is clearly selective not to say discriminatory. When dealing with people we are on fairly safe ground. An unconditional recognition and acceptance of the beingness (the personhood) of a human being is unarguable even if the individual concerned is the vilest criminal we can think of. If this were not so, law and other stabilising institutions such as the family would never have survived for so long, nor perhaps have evolved at all. That some people strike us as beyond the pale of normal human companionship is undoubtedly true yet few countries support the death penalty and most religions offer the hope of eventual salvation. One must distinguish between potential for growth and the defective manifestation before us here and now. Condemnation of the latter may be just but does not and should not entail the rejection of the former.

When dealing with non-human entities the idea of the non-manipulative attitude becomes problematical. Again with animals there is no real problem until we come to human needs for food and health. Live and let live is a commonly met sentiment nowadays but the breeding of animals for food and the destruction of pests (e.g. rats, foxes, rabbits) presents us with decisions many of us would rather avoid. In one sense we succeed since the breeding, killing and butchering are done for us. Pest control is likewise not usually our personal concern. The exploitation of the earth's resources arouses strong feelings on both sides: from those who support it because they have become attached to a certain way of life which they would lose if the plunder ceased or eased up; and from those who reject it because it upholds the principle of one person's welfare is another being's deprivation. We have only to reflect on the fate of many Indian tribes in the Amazonian basin whose very existence is imperilled through the destruction of the forests; or the degradation of the Australian aborigine, the Eskimo, the nomadic peoples of Arabia and many parts of Africa; all provide examples of the nastier side of human greed, the manipulative attitude in full flower.

Despite these and other difficulties the non-manipulative attitude is an essential prerequisite for the creation of the empathic relation. Why this is so we must now turn to.

1.423 Goodwill

Living things have a natural urge to grow, to become whatever it is in their nature to become. The genetic code and normal biological processes guarantee a constant striving, a reaching out. Provided the environment is conducive to growth the living thing will prosper. Human beings will strive similarly and for similar reasons. Humans, and perhaps all animals equipped with a central nervous system (i.e. a brain and its peripherals rather than a mere ganglion of nerve cells), have, in addition, an urge to know, to understand, to make sense of their existential nature, which includes coping with their environment. Notions of consciousness and subjectivity meet in the idea of intensionality which is characteristic of such living entities. Perception, searching, feeling, all psychical life requ-

ires objects. The subjectivity, consciousness and directedness, in short the livingness of the subject resides in this "facing" of the objects of consciousness. Furthermore this intensionality seems to be an irreducible element of the nature of humans (and at least of some animals) which is not capable of explanation by simpler, more primitive elements.

I contrast beings equipped with central nervous systems with simpler organisms because that particular line of evolution culminates in humankind, the most sophisticated example of this type of neural organisation and because the simpler organisms appear to be merely reactive. For such organisms notions of consciousness, subjectivity, even self-directedness seem, if not superfluous, at least difficult to apply without many qualifications and reservations.

Of course humans are historical whereas lower animals are not. We acquire cultural artifacts along with our genetic inheritance whereas other animals are ahistorical. Each generation must learn everything anew; there is no accumulation of culture in successive generations (genetically speaking).

The point of this diversion is to give substance to the claim that at least humans and probably other animals with central nervous systems are born with a two-fold urge to strive, to reach out: the effort to grow in the biological sense and the urge to grow in the sense of knowing and understanding the real world which features in their experience of their livingness. To be a dog is to experience the doggy world of scents, territorial markings, recognitions of other dogs and of non-dogs, and so on. The subjectivity of the dog's experience of its world is circumscribed by its potential for contacting that world and making sense of it. And similarly for other animals including *homo sapiens*. The huge gap between humankind and the rest is due to the historical nature of human experience and the means we have developed for recording and preserving it, e.g. language, art, mathematics, thought systems, and so forth. In the human case effort or will can be enhanced by the spirit of openness and the non-manipulative attitude. Will becomes goodwill, the predisposition to be well-disposed towards others, both human and non-human.

Openness facilitates the perception of the phenomenal object as it actually is; the non-manipulative attitude cultivates the willingness to recognise and accept it unconditionally. Between them they help to put the self into a state of readiness to experience the givenness of the phenomenal object. I shall be returning later to the relation between non-manipulative openness and the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness but here I want to draw attention to the more interesting relationship between non-manipulative openness and love. The model I use, following many predecessors including Scheler, is maternal love; a mother's love for her child is unconditional. Elsewhere I devote a section to love.(18) For the present I want to make just two points. Firstly, the spirit of openness and the non-manipulative attitude are aspects of (maternal) love. Secondly, I agree with Scheler and Stewart that love underpins all fellow-feeling, especially empathising and sympathy. For Scheler love launches the self into the unconscious identification with the other (thus initiating sympathy: see 2.34). For me it precipitates the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness, an event which just happens, which cannot be striven for (and which initiates the empathic relation). Love and two of the progenitors of goodwill: the non-manipulative approach and the stance of openness towards the other's beingness, are in effect interchangeable. Goodwill is natural striving embellished with love:

spirit of openness)	= love)
non-manipulative approach) (in part))
)		= goodwill
natural striving to grow,)	= effort)
to know and understand) or will)	

1.424 The other's givenness

The first stage of empathy occurs in the self's experience of the other's givenness. This is a spontaneous event, something which cannot be striven for. The experience of givenness is therefore the object of awareness in passive consciousness. We may become aware of the real world because we are acting on the world in which case it is an object of awareness in active consciousness. Alternatively phenomena may be thrust upon us (and are, many times a day) in which case we become aware of them without active intervention on our part. This is the obvious difference between active and passive con-

consciousness. The first is a function of the self's actions; the second is a result of events which just happen to us.

There are other differences between the two. Action is the behavioural manifestation of intention so that active consciousness also includes among its objects our thoughts and other cognitive phenomena. Thinking, like all mental activity, is concerned with the past (or the future which is a kind of anticipated past). Ideas, images, memories and the like refer to real world phenomena that are already in the past. They are thus not only second-hand substitutes for the real thing; they are also out-of-date. This is not to disparage the ideal world of mental activity, merely to note some of its characteristics. Returning to the experience of the other's givenness what is important for the self is to perceive the other as he or she is and not as the self imagines, remembers, thinks the other is.(19) To try to interpret another's expressiveness is to yield to a tendency to recall incidents from the past, to explore theories about the other's personality, to imagine oneself in the other's shoes, and so on. But why use this second-hand, out-of-date, possibly inaccurate information when the other is there before us?

How then can a self experience the givenness of the other in passive consciousness?(20) How can we, as it were, deliberately precipitate the event? The simple answer is that we cannot. All we can do is to cultivate the stance of openness, increase our sensitivity to the beingness of the phenomenal world in general and of other humans in particular. The other's expressiveness is then more likely to come to our notice in a spontaneous act of givenness.

The uniqueness of this grasping of the givenness of phenomena resides in its immediacy and in its purity. The "perception" is uncontaminated by our thoughts, memories, images, concepts and other cognitive material. We grasp directly, totally and purely the other as he, she or it really is at that moment.(21) This is why I think that the attitude of openness is so essential for empathising; without it the chances of spontaneously experiencing the other's givenness in passive consciousness are greatly reduced. Moreover this spontaneous experience in passive consciousness facilitates the process of per-

ceiving the other anew as though for the first time irrespective of how familiar the other may have become to the perceiving self.

Part of the experience of the other's givenness is a recognition of similarities between the self and the other. As we saw in section 1.27 and shall explore further in section 2.35, perceived similarities tend to draw people together. It is this "attractiveness", this tendency to seek others like ourselves, that provides part of the impetus to identify deliberately with the other. In mutual empathy the spirit of non-manipulative openness between the members of the relation already predisposes them to move towards each other but in other cases this attraction may be one-sided (initially) or missing altogether. This poses difficulties for the development of the empathic relation since in these cases the lack of movement towards the other effectively bars deliberate identification without which the far more daunting task of exploring differences cannot begin.

1.425 Respect

This seeing afresh is what Fromm means by respect. Unfortunately the word has come to mean "to treat with deference", "to pay special regard to" and other similar expressions which suggest rather ordered, distancing relations. Although the act of perception experientially implies distance it does not necessarily imply a hierarchical relation (e.g. superior-inferior) or a scientific detachment (e.g. the over-against relation of objective observation). In Fromm's use and mine respect means literally seeing afresh and therefore stresses separateness (the other, like the self, is a unique being) without implying distance in the sense of detachment, or remoteness, still less of indifference. It appears to me that this openness-givenness-respect sequence is very like what Bernard Lonergan(22) called "cognitive self-transcendence", in which a person may come to "know what is the case independently of his knowing it" (to quote Meynell, his biographer). In order to see afresh we must somehow bypass or go beyond our existing knowledge of the phenomenon; the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness in passive consciousness, the direct, intuitive grasping of the other's expressiveness unadulterated by memories, images, past experiences of the other, is, as far as I can see, the only way this fresh perception

can come about. To bring Lonergan (and Meynell) closer to my position I must redefine cognitive self-transcendence as "the coming to refresh my knowledge *intuitively* of what is the case independently of my already knowing it *intellectually*."

The perceptual act I have called respect (following Fromm) does not necessarily lead to empathising; that is, it does not follow that because I respect another, I will enter into, or try to establish, an empathic relation with that person nor, if I do make the attempt, that I shall succeed. What is certain is that empathising is impossible without respect. The non-manipulative exploration of similarities and differences in a spirit of goodwill is only possible just because at least one member of the relation grasps the givenness of the other as he or she is at that moment and is thus able to move towards genuine identification.(23) Once again we must remember that recognition of similarities serves to draw people together. In a mutual empathic relation both participants experience each other's givenness and so move towards deliberate identification. In 1.43 and 1.44 we will explore the less promising cases where identification (as understood in this dissertation) will prove difficult or even impossible for one or both members.

The openness-givenness-respect sequence cannot guarantee immunity from deception but it can offer a bulwark against the fraudulent intentions and practices of others. Is the sequence or any part of it a safeguard against self-deception? We might ask whether the stance of openness and the non-manipulative approach to another is consistent with the idea of self-deception. In order to maintain the false view of ourselves that self-deception implies we need the support of others either directly through our manipulation of them or indirectly through the image of ourselves which others provide. In the latter case we are forced to corrupt this reflected image if it disagrees with our own (distorted) self-image. The self-deceiver is thus unable either to maintain a non-manipulative approach to others or to adopt the stance of openness which between them help to generate the goodwill so essential for the empathic relation.

1.426 Deliberate identification

Respect of the other is a perceptual act in which the self recognises, acknowledges and accepts the unique identity of the other. The sequence as a whole also permits the self to grasp the extent to which self and other are alike and different. It is the occasion on which foreign elements in the other first become apparent. These foreign elements may initially be disturbing in the way that any strange phenomenon can provoke in us anxiety, fear, resentment, even hate. Some of the "foreignness" may have its source in ourselves in that we may project on to the other our own qualities; or we distort the other's nature in some way. In thus experiencing the (falsified) other we may perceive our own deficiencies and so turn the negative feelings on to ourselves.

For example, suppose I purchase a rare second-hand car which I treasure because of its rarity. A friend, who sees my joy in my new acquisition, points to some costly rust patches and observes that spare parts may be impossible to obtain. I note this as an instance of sour grapes and resent his belittling attitude. The truth of his remarks gradually reveals itself to me as I examine the car more closely. I then become aware of my impulsive nature which not only led me to exaggerate the good qualities of my new possession but also blinded me to its now obvious defects. I experience shame at my irrational behaviour and at the self-indulgence it betrays. Resentment of my friend now turns to condemnation of myself.

It may be objected that what is foreign is not necessarily threatening but, on the contrary, may arouse our curiosity and move us to enquire further into its nature. Among animals especially the primates and in very young children this is certainly true but in them and in older children and adults the foreign also tends to stimulate negative feelings.(24) Is this always so? To say that something in another is foreign to us is to say that we have no ready-made category or concept or procedure for coping with it. If we have, then by definition, it cannot be foreign. The question now becomes: are we always discomforted when we are made aware of our limitations? On intuitive grounds I would say, yes; but I cannot by logical argument

defend my intuition without formulating a theory of human nature which I am unwilling to do. Research evidence from studies of conformity, intolerance of ambiguity, decision-making under risky conditions suggest that perceived difference from others is discomforting (though there are considerable individual variations in susceptibility) and where no such negative feelings are experienced there is evidence of distortion of perception (presumably to remove the offending percept). This is commonly found in studies of prejudice.

It would be sensible to bear in mind that perceived differences, whilst tending to be unwelcome, vary from the mildly off-putting to the extremely distressful. I find it difficult to imagine that the foreign in other humans can actually be welcomed, that a person would feel glad that he or she had no ready-made category or concept or coping procedure for dealing with the unknown element confronting him or her; even if the foreign element were trivial I would expect no better than a mildly negative indifference. Those who claim to be inspired by the foreign, to rise to the challenge of the unknown may well be speaking the truth but that does not imply that they have no negative response to it nevertheless. If they deny this then I suspect some self-deception. Rather than admit their negative feelings to themselves (if not to others) they seem to me to be covering up their anxiety with a false bravado. In our macho, individualistic society such behaviour is more acceptable than displaying fear of the unknown; the latter is the more natural and understandable emotion in the circumstances. There is one exception to this structure: those who have never lost their child-like wonder at the world such as poets, artists, creative people generally. Whilst not all creative persons will be fearless in the face of the foreign, the fearless will not be found in any other group (except the foolish). Alternatively we may wonder whether what appears or is claimed to be foreign is really so after all. What may be foreign to me may not be so to you but from my perspective I am unable to understand how you cannot experience the foreignness that I do.

The so-called curiosity drive and the evidence from studies of sensory deprivation appear to contradict my argument.(25) To say that many animals (those with central nervous systems?) need a minimum

degree of sensory stimulation in order to maintain a satisfactory level of psychological functioning is not to say that such stimulation cannot be stressful. Too much is as distressing as too little. In any event there is always, in normal circumstances, a delicate balance between curiosity (the search for new stimulation) and timidity (the fear of the unknown or the unfamiliar). Close observation of animals, young children and adult humans repeatedly shows this tension at work. The outcomes in individual cases offer evidence of considerable variation among individuals as to the way in which this tension is resolved.

In the empathic relation we learn the true nature of our fears and so the tension is dissipated either through discovering that our fears were groundless or through remedial action or the possibility of taking such action. Even so the genuinely foreign will remain. This we will perceive for what it is: the irreducible, frequently incomprehensible difference between the self and the other which marks our separate identities. They are not and need not be sources of fear or hate; rather they are to be respected as an unalterable aspect of life. Its positive aspect is an affirmation of the self's personhood as well as an acknowledgement of the other's.

All that I have described in the last few paragraphs belongs to the second stage of empathy in which the self deliberately identifies with the other. In this conscious identification process the self tries to find a constructive outlet for those qualities he or she has in common with the other but at the same time to explore the nature and extent of their differences. The self perceives now that the two of them are linked by a common fate and realises and accepts that his or her incompleteness can be filled by union with the other.

1.427 Joint action and a shared common goal or ideal

This is best done through embarking on an action in which both pursue a shared common goal or ideal. In mutual empathy (the case we are considering) the other behaves towards the self in identical fashion with similar results. Each finds in the other the help needed to overcome their own deficiencies; each acts towards the other

cooperatively, willingly and non-manipulatively; each rediscovers and enhances not only the other's but also his or her own personhoods. The result is a feeling of unity without loss of separateness; a warmth and solidarity founded on respect and goodwill; a deep and abiding interpersonal harmony which is an active, positive relationship, constantly fuelled and supported by the empathic relation. The circularity of the empathic relation is one of its most potent features. Strengthened personal identities enhance goodwill and respect which activate the deliberate phase of the relation. The profounder awareness of the nature of their differences not only facilitates their interpersonal relationship but it enhances the spirit of openness which is the necessary precursor of the empathic relation.

I have already referred to the interdependent character of human existence. We necessarily depend on others because we are fallible and our own abilities and competencies are limited. No one is entirely self-sufficient. Of course, each of us is responsible for our own actions. Each of us must summon up the effort to act; each of us must make our own choices when decisions are called for and accept responsibility for them and for the ensuing action. It is in this context that I can understand the notion of freedom. It can mean the absence of coercion but I interpret freedom in the domain of human action as meaning being allowed to decide for oneself what one shall do. Choice is only possible if one is free to choose. If others intervene, make decisions for us, or curtail the range of decisions which we may make then we are not free or our freedom is restricted. Similarly if we are shackled by self-limiting desires, motives, attitudes, habits; if we are hemmed in by conformism, ideology and other prescriptive coping mechanisms we are unable to choose for ourselves. Our own self-limiting dispositions, parents, peers, teachers, political leaders have us, as it were, in their grip. We therefore cannot justly be held responsible for our actions or at least for those which are not entirely of our own choosing. Yet we are held accountable for all our actions regardless of the degree of freedom available to us.

Personal limitations, loss of freedom and accountability for our actions constitute an amalgam which threatens our individual personalities. In empathy we may overcome our deficiencies with the help of others with whom we can also share our strengths. We can together and separately accept responsibility for our joint action and achieve together what we set out to do. However this mutual dependency is non-manipulative, non-exploitative; the spirit of openness, respect and goodwill informs the enterprise twice over: in the joint action and in the quest for a shared common ideal or goal. Both of us choose the goal; both of us embark on the action. Because of the nature of the relationship between us, developed and centred in empathy, the unique individual identity of each of us is clarified and enhanced. We confirm our separateness but also our unity. In our mutual dependency we have found a genuine independence; in our surrender of individualism we have discovered our unique beingness (and that of the other); in the recognition and acceptance of our limitations we have found our strengths. Far from each using the other it is through each other that both are discovering not only what they are but what they might become.

In every interpersonal relation there is always one area of potentially mutual dependence: the uncertainty surrounding the basis and nature of the members' interrelationship. A child may experience a difficulty in adjusting to certain social demands which its parents think are desirable for the good of all. To the extent that the child appears unwilling or unable to accept, let alone understand, the sanctions it feels are imposed upon it the parents are clearly experiencing a difficulty along with the child. Both the parents and the child are conscious of their limitations, different in each case, of course, but alike in being apparently beyond their separate powers to resolve. The difficulties students experience in trying to cope with their learning problems are matched by those of their teachers in trying to discover effective strategies for facilitating learning. So in every helping relation both members experience inadequacies which are made public to both in the interpersonal relation itself. We do not have to penetrate the grey world of alcoholism and drug addiction, of sexual or social inadequacy, for examples of pot-

ential mutual dependency which offer the prospect of fruitful, non-manipulative, self- and other-enhancing joint action in pursuit of a common goal or ideal. The common goal is solving the problem facing each of the members; the joint action is exploration of possible solutions and essential commitment to one of them. Expert knowledge may and often will have its place but more important are goodwill, mutual respect (at least) and open exploration on an equal footing of whatever concerns the members. The way of empathy is through free discussion among equals, through experiencing the givenness of each other in identification, in non-manipulative exploration, in public declarations without fear of ridicule or loss of self-respect; on the contrary, the way of empathy is through love and the psychological safety of love. The ideal parent-child relation is precisely of this kind and is the model for every mutually empathic relation throughout life.

The whole process is graphically shown in Diagram 1.

The empathiser (Person S) from a stance of Openness and a Non-manipulative attitude towards the other (Person O) generates the Goodwill necessary to approach the other. The resulting Contact with the other in the presence of openness makes more likely the empathiser's spontaneous experience of the Other's givenness in passive consciousness and in any event produces the parallel experience of Resistance which gives the self the first intimations of the other's Foreignness. The experienced givenness of the other, facilitated by the self's spirit of openness, provides the empathiser with a fresh view of (Respect towards) the other. The Perceived similarities permit the relationship to develop to the extent that the empathiser deliberately identifies with the other. In Identification with the other differences are explored and understood and lead to Personal Knowing. The Identification process prompts the empathiser and the other to embark on an Action together. The combined action and developing understanding create or enhance the personhood of each participant (represented here by the boxes labelled Person S and Person O). That is, in action and in self- and other-knowledge and understanding each clarifies own and other's personal identity and becomes aware of his or her own unique beingness, i.e. separateness,

1.428 Givenness in active and passive consciousness

Empathy is a three-stage process in which the first stage centres on the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness in passive consciousness (precipitated by the empathiser's stance of openness and non-manipulative approach towards the other, the twin pillars of goodwill). The second stage focusses on deliberate identification in which differences are explored and resolved or at any rate fearlessly recognised and accepted. The final stage sees the participants engaged in joint action in pursuit of a common goal or ideal.

It must not be thought that the empathic relation proceeds in this linear and orderly fashion. In practice stage 1 may be repeated endlessly as each member of the relation experiences the other afresh from some new perspective. There may be many to-ings and fro-ings, many false steps as well as secure ones, mishaps along with successes. The three-stage process is rather a broad picture of what happens over a period of time but at any particular moment the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness may as often as not form the central feature of a participant's life-space.

It is the first element of the empathic relation (or something like it) that, in most accounts of empathy, receives the lion's share of attention. Even if, moment by moment, one person experiences another's givenness this (almost) continuous revelation could not provide the knowledge and understanding of the other because the conscious, i.e. deliberate, exploration of the contents of this accumulating givenness would not have been carried out. The experience of the other's givenness is but one point of departure for continued effort to form an empathic relation with the other. Without this conscious stage no sense of unity in separateness is possible.

In active consciousness every experience is an event compounded of automatic, routine, habitual elements and contrived, intended features which produce not only unexpected outcomes (even skilled performers detect minor deviations from their intentions as they occur) but also create the "surprise" of successful achievement or rather a series of surprises. The habitual aspect of action is below conscious awareness but the deviations and the felt successes are events

in passive consciousness and form the content of the experience of givenness. It is as though in active consciousness one is aware of the general direction of one's action (perhaps by some kind of matching of intention with actual achievement); one grasps the whole picture without attending to any particular part of the whole. As action is always stretched out in time and space consciousness of detail moment by moment resides in the spontaneous experience of givenness in passive consciousness. To use a somewhat dangerous analogy let a cine film correspond to the whole project run off in active consciousness. The story can only be grasped frame by frame as it unfolds and therefore the spectator must experience the frames in succession noting their peculiarities as they occur and recreating the whole as it happens. It may be objected that this is not how we experience life as we live it. The dominant characteristic of our day-to-day coping is a sense of more or less alert attentiveness to the world interspersed with more or less critical evaluation of the state of play which may from time to time become deliberate intellectual activity: thinking, problem-solving, imagining. We have, as Scheler is fond of reminding us, lost touch with our gift for intuitive awareness of ourselves, moment by moment, or every now and again, as we act on and in the real world. Empathy is the relation (or at least quasi-empathy in the case of the non-human) in which personal knowing, the knowing and understanding of others as persons, takes place in an alternation between experiences given in passive consciousness and the mainstream or trend of living activity in the real world (i.e. action) in active consciousness.

These comments apply to both second and third stages; only the content varies. It also follows that deliberate identification can alternate with joint action since the latter can reveal further differences formerly hidden from view which may become sources of fear or anxiety and which therefore need to be explored.

The simple linear model of the empathic relation implied in the preceding pages and in those which follow does not accurately reflect its dynamic and oscillating nature as we experience it (insofar as we do) in everyday life.

1.43 Initially one-sided empathy with a hostile other

This is a more difficult case because although self (S) is well-disposed towards the other (O), O is hostile to S. Hostility may take many forms: resentment, fear, anxiety, hate. Nevertheless S's attitude of openness to O's existential nature, his or her experience of O's givenness in passive consciousness and S's non-manipulative approach create the goodwill and respect towards O and thus lay the essential foundations upon which the empathic relation can grow. The difficulty is that O's hostility works not only against the empathiser and his or her efforts to reach out and get to know and understand O but against O also. In this circumstance S can only persist in maintaining an attitude of openness and displaying goodwill and respect towards O. It is necessary to maintain the non-manipulative, non-judgemental approach because, one might surmise, O is more accustomed to being manipulated, or preached at, or ridiculed, or in various ways rejected. Any attempt at intervening, even by making suggestions, would probably be counter-productive. O must make the first move of his or her own free will.

In time S's persistence may lead O to regard the empathiser as someone to trust. From O's point of view the empathiser is offering something which O may never or seldom have experienced since childhood if then: respect, which, as Fromm has suggested, is one of the essential elements of love. O is thus the beneficiary of the next best thing to unconditional maternal love. If, and only if, O does trust S can the latter try to engage O in some kind of shared action. The resistance will very likely be fraught with negative feelings because of O's defensiveness but the empathiser deals with this in the same way as in the ideal empathic relation discussed in the previous section: by undiminished respect and goodwill towards O and a persistent adherence to the non-manipulative, non-judgemental approach.

However, once again the initiative must come from O to join the empathiser in joint action and this is most likely to occur if O feels that S can help redress some personal inadequacy. O must therefore

- (a) know his or her own inadequacies fairly well;
- (b) perceive that S can offer help to overcome them;
- (c) be willing to move towards S in a spirit of goodwill.

By the nature of O's difficulties none of this may seem likely yet if the two individuals can explore these difficulties in a non-threatening, non-judgemental, person-enhancing way progress may be made. This is the tricky part of the relation for S's intervention may be the only way out of the impasse; but intervention, especially if uninvited, borders on the manipulative which has no place in the empathic relation. One solution is for S to offer in his or her own life an example which will inspire O to adopt. Of course, S can only be what is in his or her nature to be; if, by living according to that nature, S offers O a model all well and good. But example can sometimes be off-putting. To the alcoholic sobriety in another often appears unattainable however much the addict longs for it.

Another alternative is to discuss O's own aims, desires and needs and O's methods for achieving them. If S does this in the spirit of openness, goodwill and respect O may experience S as a trustworthy and supportive person and may eventually respond in like fashion. The turning point is O's discovery of the effort (the goodwill) to move towards S in the same spirit as S acts towards O. Thus slowly, cautiously both will come to know their own inadequacies; non-manipulatively they explore their similarities and differences more truly, with a less guilt-laden and less defensive attitude.

Deliberate identification as the process in which one or both members of the (possibly growing) empathic relation find common grounds for establishing unity with one another (without loss to their separate identities) rests principally on the recognition by one or both of them of what they share in common. This in turn depends on the quality of each participant's experience of the other's givenness. Since this experience is an event which cannot therefore be brought about deliberately I have suggested that an important pre-

disposing factor is the attitude of non-manipulative openness adopted by each member towards the other. At each step along the chain of dependencies there are opportunities for various pathologies to intrude and affect the outcome. I have stressed that human fallibility ensures that even in mutual empathy misunderstandings, personal limitations, temporary unhelpful emotional states and the like may interfere with the development and maintenance of the empathic relation. Given that goodwill is available in abundance to both participants these mishaps are reduced to a minimum and those that do surface are usually resolved without much difficulty or ill effect.

In the case we are now considering (and in the one to follow) the scope for false identifications due to the pathologies just mentioned is greatly increased. One member may misconstrue a trait in the other. For example, defective persons tend to perceive defects in others similar to their own even though the other is free of these particular self-limiting characteristics. For these and other reasons it may not be possible to move directly to the deliberate identification stage; the transition may be too sharp and daunting. In a preliminary attempt to experience the empathiser O may simply spontaneously copy S in some particular which seems important to O. (26) Or O may examine S in more depth consciously choosing parts of S's repertoire to emulate. The first kind of imitation is a rather pathetic mimicking, a relic of childhood, of social conditioning. It is obviously unsuccessful for it does not liberate O from his or her difficulty, merely disguising it with a surface gloss. Common examples of this type of imitation are the adoption of the model's speech habits or gestures or typical social acts such as methods of greeting others. Conscious imitation is rather better in that O's exploration of S as an exemplar is, in effect, a first attempt at self-examination. In the warmth of S's support this experience, though often disturbing, can prove rewarding for both members. It also demonstrates to both of them the first overt sign of O's goodwill. Now O may deliberately identify with S (as S has already identified with O) and the empathic relation can proceed as in the case of mutual empathy.

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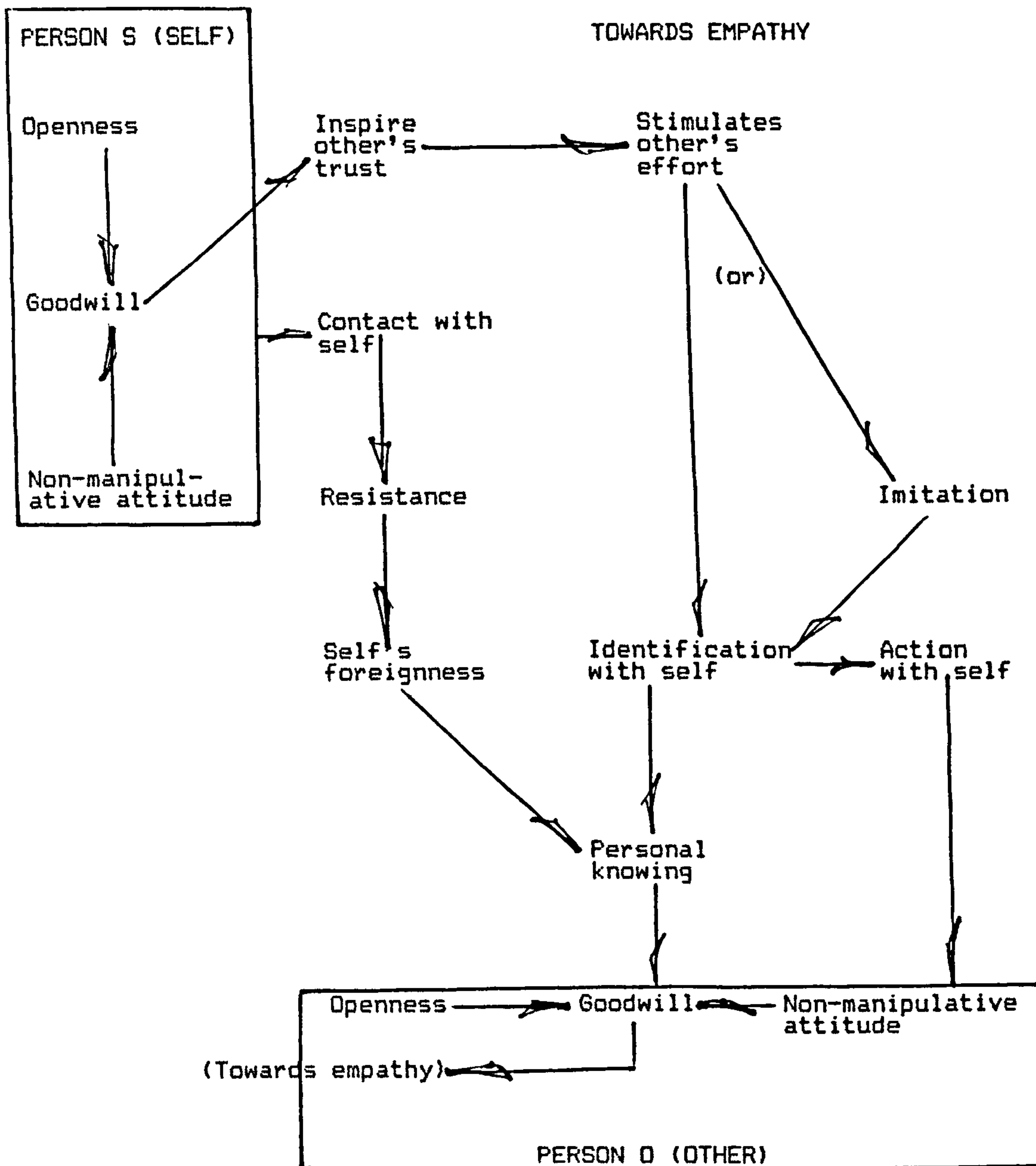


Diagram 2:

The evolution of empathy in a hostile other. This diagram is to be read from the perspective of the other who comes eventually to trust the empathiser and move towards him or her possibly through imitation but ultimately through deliberate identification. All arrows represent necessary relations between the elements.

In this initially one-sided case the empathic relation may take a long time to develop and it may suffer many setbacks because of O's attitudes and difficulties and possibly S's own problems in coping with them despite his or her openness, goodwill and respect towards O. The claim I make, however, is that if S maintains his or her side of the empathic relation there is a good chance that O will reciprocate. There is little hope for O, especially if his or her problems are serious, in any other kind of relation. If the empathic relation cannot help O nothing can.

Diagram 2 gives some idea of how this relation works.

As a result of the empathiser's openness and non-manipulative approach and consequent goodwill towards him or her the other learns to Trust the empathising self. This Stimulates the other to make the effort to move towards the empathiser who will in any event have precipitated the other's experience of Resistance in which the Self's foreignness is grasped arousing negative feelings in the other. The other may try to be like the empathiser perhaps first imitating some aspect of his or her behaviour. Imitation is always unsatisfactory so the other may now be encouraged to make a deliberate Identification with the self. This eventually leads to joint action and to the other's greater knowledge and understanding (Personal knowing) of their similarities and differences. The outcomes are the other's emergent personhood and a movement by him or her towards an open, non-manipulative approach towards the empathiser. The result is the other's blossoming goodwill. Once this happens the cycle described in the previous section (mutual empathy) can begin. In practice progress through the stages represented in this diagram are likely to be far less tidy and systematic. With a patient empathiser to initiate the other's development the latter may eventually attain a kind of personhood sufficient for starting the cycle leading to mutual empathy and personal growth as shown in Diagram 1.

1.44 Empathy between a neutral and a hostile

Earlier I said that persons cannot be neutral since it is characteristic of persons to be well-disposed to others even to those who are hostile as in the preceding example. Nevertheless humans are falli-

ble; we all have our off-days and most of us confess to shortcomings of one sort or another. However well-disposed we may be towards others either by nature or through self-discipline we cannot hope automatically to love all who come within our orbit. Perhaps this reflects on the kind of society we live in. Where the being mode of existence is endemic, where members see themselves as persons living in community and therefore, as a matter of course, respecting others and living in self- and other-enhancing ways (even if this way of life should be confined to the community itself) then presumably the conditions for being other than well-disposed towards others cannot or do not arise. Human fallibility, however, is still a factor to reckon with in such a society. The Yequama tribe(27) live as a community of persons and seem naturally to enter into empathic relations as part of their daily lives. Young and old, healthy and ailing, those who work and those who do not, all are accorded equal respect; the beingness of each is honoured; intervention is taboo or rather, simply does not feature in their world view. Yet Jean Liedloff reports the case of the young father who in a moment of rare anger struck his son who was irritating him. All who witnessed this act were horrified but none more so than the hapless father who wept as loudly as his son at what he had done. I imagine that in our acquisitive society persons are even more prone to lapses of this sort.

The case I am now considering is therefore not so much a genuine neutral individual as a person who for one reason or another finds that he or she is not moved to reach out to a specific hostile or repellent individual in the characteristic well-disposed manner of persons. The obvious response to this discovery is for individuals to confront their own feelings directly and experience their givenness. Since it is the other who occasions the unwonted stance this could be combined with the deliberate adoption of the attitude of openness so that the neutral person (who might even be somewhat negative in his or her feelings to the other at that moment) may experience the givenness of the other along with his or her own feelings. We must remember that the experience of givenness is an event and therefore not under the control of the potential empathiser so there is no guarantee that it will happen. Analysis is of no

avail for that belongs to the ideal world and brings us into contact with second-hand data. It may have value after we have experienced the other's givenness and our own feelings in passive consciousness and grasped their identity directly, here and now. Then perhaps analysis may be of use but certainly not as a first step. The outcome in that case would most likely be a rationalisation of our feelings rather than a clarification of them. First we must "see" them as they really are.

So even here the spirit of openness, the experience of the other's givenness and respect, and goodwill towards the other must be summoned up from somewhere, off-day or not. It seems to me that it is the cultivation of openness and the adoption of a non-manipulative approach which are most likely both to safeguard us from the eventuality we are exploring and for coping with it when it occurs. As they are necessary precursors of goodwill they must count as the principal necessary conditions for developing an empathic relation followed by their two outcomes: respect and goodwill. All are embodied in the nature of persons.

But what of the spontaneous generation of the empathic relation in a truly neutral individual? Is that likely? What is the likely reaction of such a neutral individual? One possibility is that he or she would react defensively, clearly not very conducive to the formation of an empathic relation. Another possible response is to agree with or join forces with the hostile other either for the sake of peace and quiet (a manipulative approach and possibly defensive as well) or because the "neutral" individual genuinely feels that the other's hostility is just. In the latter event it might conceivably happen that the two enter into a discussion which clarifies to both of them the real nature of the other's hostility and thus prepares the way for a possible change in the other's attitude towards goodwill to the unexpected ally. If now either partner in the relation can call upon such fragments of personhood that have survived the self-limiting strategies learned as part of the socialisation process (or other mechanism) and so move towards the other member in a more positive, non-manipulative way then an empathic relation might just struggle into tentative existence despite the inauspicious start.

Whether or not the hostile's grievances were justified the fact that the other member has lent a sympathetic ear has encouraged him or her to become better disposed to the sympathiser.(28) Nevertheless neither member has yet adopted a whole-hearted stance of openness or a non-manipulative attitude. The spontaneous generation of these twin pillars of empathy in the conditions I have imagined seems very unlikely but is possible. The likelihood seems to me to depend on the neutral person's access to self- and other-enhancing strategies and the seriousness with which the hostile is seeking personhood. As I have said no human being is perfect; therefore all of us are persons *in potentia*. To the extent that we strive towards near-personhood we are at least offering a model worth emulating. With effort we can all approach personhood as closely as lies within our powers but not without the help of one who has already attained some success. Some do make the effort and persist throughout their lives. Many, I suspect, do not sustain the effort or do so only half-heartedly. Some do not even make the effort at all and seem content to live at the level of sophisticated animals at best.

Personhood (individual personality, unique personal identity) is not something mystical, available only to a few but is freely available to anyone who can bring to the task the essential predispositions. If we are locked into self-limiting coping strategies, attitudes, and beliefs our freedom to choose is severely curtailed, so severely that we may never break out of our self-imposed prison without outside help. Therefore when I say that only persons can create persons I am saying that only those who have journeyed on this route towards self-discovery and self-awareness, who have profited from the experience and recognised the value of being over having, of love over manipulation, of goodwill over ill-will, of unconditional acceptance of others over attribution of labels whether justified or not, only such people can initiate the empathic relation in which these qualities and states can come into existence and prosper. Only someone at the positive ends of the enhancement-limitation and being-having dimensions can create (help to bring into being) another more or less whole person.

1.45 The necessary and sufficient conditions for the empathic relation

I construe the empathic relation as the route to personal knowing. I further claim that only those who approach others in a spirit of non-manipulative, non-judgemental, non-exploitative openness can experience the givenness of others which makes possible the quest for personal knowing. Only persons, i.e. those who live towards the near-perfect end of the three dimensions outlined above, satisfy this requirement. Therefore, for two people to form an empathic relation

- (a) at least one of them must be a person as defined above, i.e. one who has a healthy self-image, who is well-disposed towards others, who fosters self-worth in others.(29)

Because of human fallibility even persons may sometimes fail to initiate an empathic relation but if they do succeed it is because the event which, I hold, cannot be striven for actually does happen, i.e.

- (b) at least one of them will spontaneously experience the other's givenness in passive consciousness.

Only in this way may one individual grasp the nature of another as he or she really is at that moment, directly, here and now, without dilution or distortion by previous knowledge, personal theories about the other's nature, existing classificatory systems and similar second-hand cognitive material. Once an empathic relation is initiated two deliberate acts are necessary to sustain it. The first permits the free and psychologically safe exploration of the members' similarities but especially their differences. Hence

- (c) at least one of them will deliberately identify with the other.

In the spontaneous givenness of the other the self experiences the similarities between them (which tends to draw them together or at least to find each other attractive in some way) and obtains a first intimation of the differences which separate them. The foreign element in the other will tend to discomfort the perceiver. In deliberate identification these differences are explored non-manipulatively, non-judgementally; thus the nature of foreign elements is either clarified or accepted as an irreducible, unknowable fact of life but not on that account to be feared. Sometimes deliberate identificat-

ion is preceded by imitation in which the imitator first makes an effort to act like the other. This superficial behaviour fails to promote the personal identity sought; therefore the individual moves on to identification. The movement throughout is towards developing goodwill and respect towards the other and a knowledge and understanding of their individual selves.

The second deliberate act is for both members to discover a higher purpose which commits the two of them to a joint action. Each will find in the common task his or her unique fulfilment, discover interpersonal harmony and extend his or her feelings of mutual respect, eventually love, for the other. It is therefore necessary that

- (d) the participants discover a shared common goal or ideal in pursuit of which they engage in joint action.

The discovery of a shared common ideal or goal centres on their (now) better understood deficiencies and strengths. In joining in action to pursue this ideal or goal the members not only further clarify and grasp their individual identities; they also enhance both their own and the other's personhoods. In this way they finally grasp their unique selves (their separate identities) whilst at the same time enjoying a sense of unity. They are simultaneously one and separate. This creation and enhancement of personhood reinforces the goodwill and respect they show towards each other (and so perpetuates the empathic relation) and establishes interpersonal harmony.

1.5 SOME QUESTIONABLE CASES OF EMPATHY

It is clearly possible for anyone to adopt and cultivate the spirit of openness towards anything whatsoever. All material things, both living and non-living, have an existential nature, a beingness which is as much open to our sensitive awareness as are our fellow human beings. If we are less concerned about the non-human even to the point of indifference or contempt the fault lies with ourselves and our world view. Cultures vary in the way in which their members order their phenomenal world in terms of value. Value systems change as a result of necessity, or the influence of alternative world

views, or the subtle changes in attitudes which can occur spontaneously among a group of people. Within the great variety of cultural differences the two modes of existence, having and being, may be construed as the principal discriminators among the many cultures we know about. Addiction to material possessions, worship of conspicuous excellence or glory, pride in successful achievement in the pursuit of either, are the hallmarks of a society or social group which favours the having mode of existence. In such a society or group anything, be it object or person, which is useful to these ends is accorded high value (with a value more or less proportional to its usefulness but only so long as it continues to be useful). That which does not serve these ends is accorded low or no value. The smaller or the more rigid the social group, the more of its members will share the resulting world view. It is possible to find societies which value aggressiveness or acquisitiveness or selfishness as the desired way of life. In more open societies a wider variety of value systems is met though the dominant having mode of existence prevails.

The end result of a preference for the having mode and the institutionalised ways in which it is handed on from one generation to another is that the attitude of openness is directed only to those aspects of the phenomenal world which will help perpetuate the current world view. This leads to the degradation of education (knowledge becomes a commodity, useful for getting on and hence ensuring that some knowledge is more useful than others). It may lead to confrontation between different social groups (e.g. bosses and workers, "haves" and "have-nots"), and to many of the other ills which afflict industrialised societies. It also means that members of such societies develop blind spots. There are parts of the phenomenal world which they simply do not register. It may be women, animals, the physical environment, the produce-consume cycle to name but a few. Little wonder that women's rights, children's rights, animal rights, ecology parties and the like are gaining ground though still the concerns of minorities; their stridency more than offsets their small following.

1.51 Empathy with non-humans

Nourishing an attitude of openness towards any phenomenal object in our society is therefore not easy but it can be done and is done. Artists and creative people in any field (i.e. people who spend much of their time in creative activities) do so in varying degrees; unless they did, their activities would not be creative since the essence of creativity is a readiness and skill to transcend the known, the familiar, to make new connections, to re-interpret accepted wisdom. For the same reasons the experience of the givenness of the phenomenal world in passive consciousness is possible without limitation as to the nature of the object (except that imposed by the character of our perceptual apparatus). And just as with humans, so with non-humans, their givenness cannot be willed; it is an event which happens spontaneously no matter what the object is. Only by cultivating the spirit of openness and nurturing it by self-discipline and approaching the world non-manipulatively are we able to increase the likelihood of the spontaneous experience of givenness befalling us.

Clearly we can respect the phenomenal object in the sense of seeing it again afresh. And we can certainly be well-disposed towards it. Both follow from the goodwill generated by the stance of openness and the non-manipulative approach. What may be difficult, at least conceptually, is to grasp similarities and differences between ourselves and the object whose givenness we have experienced; it is the resistance encountered with the object which first acquaints us of our limitations by establishing the boundaries of the self and the other-than-self. In the human case we also discover something about our separate identities and first meet the foreign in the other. This can surely apply to all objects. Performers in the arts seem to go through some such process. Actors feel themselves into their parts; they live the characters they portray sometimes with devastating effects on their private lives. Painters "feel" the texture of their subject, enter into its form and structure; dancers transform themselves into princes, demons, beasts or mushrooms. To do any of these things calls for a perception of similarities and differences

(though it calls also for an imaginative translation which cuts through the normalcy of everyday life and which may be beyond the skill and possibly willingness of ordinary folk). But if artists can do it so can the rest of us with effort, at least to some degree. Arguing along the same lines we can now easily imagine the deliberate identification with non-human objects. Though they doubtless would not use this language the relation between a craftsman or craftswoman and his or her handiwork is of this kind. What some would call the instinctive feel for what is right for a given material to produce a given result with just the appropriate effort corresponds to the deliberate identification of empathy. Thinkers often speak of getting inside the phenomenon they are investigating, imagining what it is like to be the object, to carry out the operation they are struggling to perfect or create. This strategy is nowadays offered as a technique for prompting creative thinking.

There are great differences between the empathic relation discussed in the preceding sections and what I am describing here. In trying to know and understand non-human entities we cannot say that we are trying to know and understand them as persons. Personal knowing has no place outside the human domain. Similarly in no sense can we say that one of the outcomes of this "empathic" relation is to establish the non-human object's personhood. Persons and personhoods are uniquely human phenomena. However we can justly claim an analogous relation with non-human objects by talking not of personhood or personal identity but of beingness. By beingness I mean that existential nature through which a thing is what it is and no other. It is the essence of that thing. In humans we call it the person; we construe the person as the essence of the biological machine, the organism, the psychophysical individual. That which we approach in a spirit of openness, the givenness of which we experience in passive consciousness, which we respect and towards which we show our goodwill, with which we deliberately identify, in short which we try to know and understand as itself and no other thing, is in fact the essential nature or character of that thing. With humans it happens to be the person made manifest in his or her personhood. So with things it is their "thinghood".

It is, of course, much easier to use such language to speak of our experience with say chimpanzees and doubtless cat and dog lovers would say the same of their pets. Indeed the danger of falling into anthropomorphism is very great and is to be found even in scientific accounts such as those of Jane Goodall and the Gardners.(30) Nevertheless I believe the analogy I am using is permissible and valid; if people object I would still claim that it is right to speak of a quasi-empathic relation with non-human objects which in its essentials is identical with the empathic relation with humans described in the preceding pages.

Two other differences are worth noting. The first is that in most cases the relation is one-sided. However, in the case of animals especially those most like ourselves, this is not always easy to assert. Conditioning cannot account for all the subtle responsiveness some animals show towards their human partners. They often spontaneously express joy or affection towards humans (or what we take to be as such) which do not appear to be contingent on reward or reinforcement of any kind. Jane Goodall writes of the way her chimpanzees in the wild eventually greeted her as one of the troop using their own natural gesture, the touching of hands. Nevertheless in the majority of non-human cases the relation is one-sided. As I have said elsewhere the empathic relation exists so long as one member is striving non-manipulatively to know and understand an other-than-self as a person. Therefore we need only make the modification just suggested concerning the essential nature of the non-human object and we may speak of at least a one-sided quasi-empathic relation with it.

The second difference is that interpersonal harmony is not an outcome of the quasi-empathic relation with non-humans. David Attenborough reports spending contented moments with his gorillas, albeit briefly, and they with him as did Jane Goodall with her chimpanzees and they with her. Nevertheless we need to speak in analogous terms in these cases; animals are not persons. In general, therefore, interpersonal harmony cannot be an outcome of the quasi-empathic relation with non-human objects. The nearest conceptual equivalent which comes to mind is Schweitzer's "reverence for life".

Despite these differences it seems clear to me that the human empathiser in the quasi-empathic relation experiences an enhancement of his or her personhood and experiences a sense of harmony with the world which is nonetheless real even though he or she cannot share these experiences with the other (in most cases). Moreover the affirmation and enhancement of his or her personhood (in the same way as in the human cases) enhances both the spirit of openness and the goodwill the empathising person brings to the task of knowing and understanding the non-human object; and the greater knowledge and understanding thus gained enhances his or her respect for the object.

I therefore feel that the empathic relation between persons and the quasi-empathic relation between a person and a non-human object are identical in the processes that really matter. Empathy (and quasi-empathy) is a relation in which a human being strives non-manipulatively to know and understand the essential nature of anything through personal contact.

1.52 Empathy with one's self

Can we empathise with ourselves? A person can certainly look back at a former self and forward to a future self. We can accept without argument the existence of a here and now self, the one looking backwards and forwards. The past and future selves are not real selves; they are images: memories of the past, phantasies of the future. However the past self was real once and we can vividly imagine this real self though perhaps not as convincingly as a real other, a friend, say. The one difference between our two imagined selves and another person is that there is a continuous existential thread linking all our three selves (past, present and future). Such a link is missing in our relation with another person.

The continuity can be deceptive. We do not necessarily recall perfectly; we tend to distort especially the less reputable or the most flattering incidents in our past. Nonetheless we do from time to time mentally relive our grief over an unhappy incident or recall our joy over a happy one. But can we empathise with this past person? Can we strive to know and understand him or her as a person? We

can but only in the form of images. In what sense can we bring a spirit of openness to images? How can we experience their givenness in passive consciousness? The truth is that we cannot for an image is insubstantial and in a sense has nothing to give. It does not have an existential nature like real world objects. Images slip and slide about and however hard we try (and perhaps because of it) we cannot really get to grips with them. There appear to be exceptions. Eidetic images (a category which is disputed by some psychologists) are held so vividly in mind that those gifted in this way can reproduce them faithfully on paper. Artists are able to draw freely from memory so presumably they too must have some fairly stable and robust images to call upon. For most of us, however, imagery is fluid, indistinct and ephemeral. The odd thing is that we think we can recall a person or object or place to mind at will and do so accurately; we feel that we have got it right. The truth is soon revealed when we try to "look" at this image and describe it to someone else. Even if we succeed are we describing the image or are we recalling stored conceptual knowledge which owes little or nothing to the image at all? We have similar experiences with auditory images. We may "hear" an orchestral work in our mind's ear or think we can, yet all attempts to hum it may prove in vain. Once again if we do succeed is it because we know the work or is it because we really are able to reproduce the internally "heard" sounds?

It might be argued that we can empathise with our past self by projecting ourselves into it, by standing in the shoes of the person we once were and grasping the source of our sadness or joy as we experienced it then. Quite apart from the fact that seeing things from another's perspective is a mistaken view of empathy the idea of projection is, in any case, inappropriate for we can only project into the past either the person we now are which would not allow us to grasp the person we were then, or we imagine the person we were and project that in which case we are chasing one image with another.

Similar arguments apply to future selves only with more force. The future is a kind of imagined past, lived in an actual present. We see ourselves in situations as though they had already happened but we enact them now in our minds. The person we imagine is an inven-

tion, though of ourselves. To empathise with such a person would be to try to grasp a ghost, though a creature of our own making. It is twice removed from reality, once as a non-existent being and the second time as an image of this fictional character.

How then are we to account for the very real experiences we go through when recalling our former selves or anticipating (or inventing) our future selves? Is not my pity or my joy or my hope directed not at myself as I once was (or might be) but at another? I am at once myself in recollection or imagination and yet not myself. My memory tells me that the child who is heart-broken over a damaged toy is myself yet the feelings I now experience are not about myself but another, perhaps about young distressed children in general of whom I, in memory, am an instance, a type case. I emotionally identify with this other; I not only grasp his feelings in recollection but I myself am temporarily filled with them. This is not at all the same thing as empathy where the essence of the relation is the discovery of unity with another without loss of awareness of our separate identities. Indeed the result of empathy is an enhancement of our separate identities and a burgeoning of goodwill and respect (and ultimately love) towards the other and an enhancement of our attitude of openness to the other's beingness. In chapter 2 I shall revisit this theme and discuss how empathy differs from other relations between a self and an other-than-self.

1.53 Empathy with entertainers

Is an empathic relation possible between an entertainer and his or her audience? It is often claimed by actors and other entertainers that they can sense the mood and feelings of their audiences. Some students of empathy have similarly claimed that spectators can and do empathise with actors and other performers. Theodor Lipps first advanced the idea of *Einfühlung* by which he meant the projection by the spectator of self into the showman's action such that the former experiences the latter's movements as though he or she (the spectator) were actually executing them. The spectator, so to speak, steps into and enjoys the performer's act and thus feels at one with the actor. This idea of projection seems to haunt studies of empathy.

Scheler railed against it as a valid explanation of the phenomenon of fellow-feeling and doubted (quite rightly in my view) the propriety of empathy as presented by Lipps. Unfortunately he threw out the baby with the bath water as Edith Stein showed in her more profound study of empathy which, though it impressed Scheler, did not lead him to modify his view substantially.

Nevertheless there does seem to be a striving to know and understand the other as a person both by the spectator and by the performer except that in the latter's case the effort seems directed at a generalised other, or at least a collective identity representing the audience as a whole. (I examine the problem of the generalised other in the next section.) Clearly the openness, respect, goodwill and deliberate identification are potentially available to both sides though the object of the performer's empathic relation with the audience must be of a generalised type. On the other hand the notion of deliberate identification has to be stretched to the limit to account for a possible empathic relation. How can a performer (or a spectator) explore and understand the differences between them and which mark off their separate identities? Despite the difficulties of accounting for this and other phenomena it does seem just possible that performers and their audiences can strive for mutual empathy or something very like it. Whilst it is also possible that emotional identification offers a readier explanation, empathy cannot decisively be ruled out.

In the case of some performances we might also ask whether an audience (or the performers) can establish an empathic relation with the original creator, the playwright or composer, for instance. Is it important that they should be able to do so or indeed should do so? In these and similar situations the relation between the self and the other centres on an expressive object: a play, a musical work, a ballet, a painting or piece of sculpture, a novel or poem, through the medium of which the spectator (and the interpreter in those works which need an interpreter) can, as it were, get in touch with the creator's intentions and feelings. Insofar as expressive objects, like any other object, can represent the other we can say that anyone may establish at least a quasi-empathic relation with them.

However it does not follow that empathy can or need be involved in trying to know and understand the creator of these objects. Spectators may not find this knowledge and understanding essential in order to appreciate the work and I suspect such a painstaking study would be beyond the capabilities of the majority. One can enjoy a musical work or a poem or a painting without any knowledge of, or even interest in, its author. But suppose the spectator's enjoyment would be greatly increased by knowing and understanding the author would this best be done through a study of his or her work or through reading a biography? And would empathy be involved in either case? (I will assume that even if the creator is living, personal knowing would be impossible for most people, though even here there is the interesting question as to whether personally knowing the creator and even enjoying an empathic relation with him or her which, to make the most favourable case we will suppose to be mutual, would lead to a deeper understanding of any particular work.) In either case the spectator/reader would be constructing a fictional character. The work itself being an expression of its creator carries his or her unique imprint (insofar as the work is an original an honest product and not a pastiche or copy of someone else's) in the same way as handwriting distinguishes one person from another. It is from these signs (if they can be read correctly) that the spectator might build a picture of the work's creator as a person. However, he or she is but an image and I have already suggested that images are not approachable in the same way as real objects. In the ideal world in which images exist there is no foothold on which to secure a purchase. Yet because they are creations we can identify with them in some way. We can perceive and explore differences and similarities between ourselves and the author whom we have imagined. But then we would be acting as we did when we identified with our former (or future) selves which we examined in the previous section. Since the author is our creation, even though built from his or her unique "handwriting", we project ourselves into the image so it is simultaneously ourselves and not ourselves. That is to say we know (or believe) that the image refers to another but in effect it is substantially ourselves. As in the case of the imagined self, empathy cannot play any part in efforts to know and understand either by the

route just described or by reading a biography where the same tendencies can be observed though in this case aided or obscured by the efforts of the biographer. Intellectual knowledge is undoubtedly valuable but it is not personal knowledge even when we have personal acquaintance with the other through his or her work. The relationship between personal knowing (rooted in the spontaneous, intuitive act of grasping the givenness of persons in passive consciousness and, by analogy, of things in general) and intellectual knowledge deserves separate treatment.(31)

1.54 Empathy and the generalised other

In discussing the possibility of empathising with our own selves (past or future) I suggested that, at least in the case of a remembered former self, we might identify with the person we once were by a process of abstraction and generalisation so that in effect we would be identifying with a generalised other, say a child in distress, who is typical of all such children. We imagine, so to speak, that our former self is a representative of the class. We tacitly accept our personal recollections as sound indicators of genuine experience of that particular kind of phenomenal object; we assume that we correctly claim special insight as to its feelings and so forth. This way of reasoning can be applied to all persons we do not actually know personally but of whom we know as members of society. There are innumerable categories of individual: the poor, the lazy, the clever, religious believers, socialists, teachers, train drivers, punk, bover boys, and so on. We may have met instances of these classes; we will certainly have heard about them. The question is can we empathise with them?

If we meet a representative of one of them then, of course, our attitude of openness and our experience of their givenness will lay the foundations of empathy as described earlier. Perhaps our goodwill and respect may lead us deliberately to identify with them and to explore and understand the differences between us. In the nature of the relationship between ourselves and this type of other (e.g. its accidental or instrumental character; we chance upon them or we meet them when we need their services) the other is likely to be at best neutral towards us. In some cases he or she will be hostile. Never-

theless an empathic relation is possible and we can initiate it even if we are unsuccessful in inspiring the minimal trust and effort in the other for the relation to develop.

Does it make sense to suggest that we can generalise from such single instances to all members of the class and say that we empathise with, say, disaffected youth, or with mods or rockers, or with policemen, and so on? Once again we would be referring to images. A generalisation is by definition an image, a concept, an idea, perhaps constructed from personal experience but not necessarily so and frequently founded only on hearsay. The concept stands for the phenomenal object and is thus not approachable in empathy which is and must be rooted in personal experience as it happens. As in the last section we encounter a form of intellectual knowledge (behavioural and social scientists depend on it for their theory-building, research effort and explanations) which may be useful but may also stand in the way of genuine understanding in empathy with a particular individual representing the class. This is one of the main lessons to be learned from Krishnamurti though he uses a somewhat different language to express what I regard as an identical idea. Genuine knowledge of phenomena is vitiated or obscured by what we know conceptually or conjure up in the form of images. What is corrupted is the intuitive, spontaneous awareness of the other which can only happen in the existential relation between observer and observed.

Hence there can be no empathic relation between ourselves and a class of individuals even when we have personal experience of a representative of the class. The best we can hope for is an insight into the particular case which might illumine our views about the general class and which might prompt new thought about its members as a whole. And that might be no mean achievement. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to pretend or claim that we understood, say, the punk movement, or the feelings of the unemployed, on the slender evidence provided by personal experience of some of their members, however valid and valuable it may have been.

1.55 Empathy and historical others

Exactly the same argument applies to this case as to the generalised other. Famous people either living or dead are necessarily images constructed by us as a result of reading or hearing about them. In those rare instances in which we have enjoyed personal knowing of one of them we may have entered into an empathic relation with them but we cannot do so vicariously. Empathy is a first-hand not a second-hand or lower order experience. Whenever we rehearse in our minds or reflect on what we learn indirectly about others the outcome must of necessity lead at best to intellectual, conceptual knowledge, though that is not to say that insight may not result. In that event the intuitive act would centre on ideas or images (which may, of course, be of great significance); it would not be about the persons that these historical figures undoubtedly were or are.

Similarly we cannot claim empathy with departed relatives or friends whom we once knew and perhaps loved. We can recall our empathic relations with them (if we experienced such relations) and we can conjure up as images their faces, moods, ways and so forth subject as always to the vagaries of memory and the despoliation of time. More than this we cannot claim.

1.6 GRADES OF EMPATHY

Edith Stein in her theory of empathy proposed three stages or grades:

- (1) the emergence of the experience;
- (2) the fulfilling explication;
- (3) the objectification of the explained tendencies.

In stage 1 a self is faced by a foreign mental life, say a happy person who perhaps has just received good news concerning a hoped-for promotion. The perceiving self in stage 2 follows the course of the experience, perhaps by exploring the other's expressions of happiness and discovering the meaning of the promotion for the other.

Finally in stage 3 the other's happiness faces the self but now clarified and understood in all its richness.

Stein makes the point that "people do not always go through all grades but are often satisfied with one of the lower ones". In my own account, also, empathy has three stages:

- (1) the experience of the other's givenness in passive consciousness;
- (2) deliberate identification with the other;
- (3) joint action with the other in pursuit of a shared common ideal or goal.

The first stage is only possible if the self approaches the other non-manipulatively and in a spirit of openness (the twin pillars of goodwill). The second stage is a function of the perceived similarities grasped in the first stage and leads to the exploration of differences and either their resolution or their acceptance as irreducible markers of the participants' separateness. The final stage moves towards the positive acceptance of each by the other in action; they act together in the same direction and for the same reasons (which does not preclude other personal reasons as well). I have tried to show that these three stages are necessary because empathy is here defined as a relation between participants who want to know and understand each other as persons (although only one member need be so motivated for the relation to be counted as empathic) and in the course of which both establish (or maintain) their own individual identities and enhance that of the other.

I agree with Edith Stein that it is very likely that some people will not go through all stages. In my theory the first stage is an event which cannot be willed but can be facilitated by cultivating the spirit of openness and the non-manipulative approach not only towards other human beings but to other living and even non-living things. Not everyone will even get this far but of those who do, not all will want to identify deliberately with the other. If stage 1 depends on love (the unconditional acceptance of someone in and for him or herself), stage 2 involves commitment. There are degrees of love and similarly of commitment. To enter stage 3 love and commitment are necessary but not sufficient. We also need staying power,

determination, even moral courage sometimes. It is therefore not at all difficult to imagine that different grades of empathic experience might be encountered.

In my account I have tended to assume that all three stages of empathy are experienced in the various conditions I have explored. This is because I cannot see how anyone claiming to be striving to know and understand another as a person can justify the claim unless he or she has attempted all three stages. I admit that there are degrees of knowing and understanding but even so the level of personal knowing attainable in less than the full cycle of empathy seems to me unlikely to excite the hearts and imaginations of any but the most easily satisfied and the least concerned about their fellow humans.

On the other hand since part of empathy is innate (again agreeing with Scheler) and part learned one must accept the fact that in any particular population the range of competence in entering into empathic relations (as in any other human activity) is likely to range over the full set of possibilities. In an industrialised society, as I have tried to show, the potential for growth of empathy is enormous but the chances of it happening are dismal. A start can be made by isolating the essential sub-skills and attitudes and discovering ways of promoting their development naturally and non-manipulatively. There are precedents; David Stewart's treatment of alcoholics and drug addicts described briefly in *Preface to Empathy* and much more fully in *Thirst for Freedom* offer examples. Although Fromm did not concern himself with empathy he wrote of matters central to my theme and expressed his views forcefully and constructively. On the whole the research literature on empathy is disappointing and the social skills industry barely acknowledges the existence of persons let alone provides for their growth and development.

To explore properly a possible curriculum for a "course" in how to establish empathic relations and that would build on our natural gifts is beyond the scope of this enquiry which only attempts to clarify the nature of empathy.(32) The fact that there are grades of empathy and that I have focussed my attention on all three stages as

though their performance were the norm serves to highlight the importance of devising programmes aimed at helping people to develop empathic relations.

1.7 SUMMARY

I have examined the six characteristics which seem to distinguish the empathic relation from others. I have explored various forms which the empathic relation may take and have suggested the sufficient and necessary conditions for its initiation and continued nurturance. I have discussed some popular misconceptions of empathy and a number of instances to which the notion of empathy is, in my view, mistakenly applied. In a number of asides, mostly in notes at the end of this chapter, I have pointed to conceptual and other difficulties which would have to be attended to if one were to go beyond this enquiry in order to lay the foundations of a new psychology of personal being. I have deliberately avoided referring to the empathy literature so that my account may stand out the more starkly and, I hope, the more clearly. I make no apologies for its skeletal character since I believe a sharply drawn image is not only easier to perceive; it is also easier to evaluate constructively. My purpose in this chapter and the next is to create a plausible plan for a structure rather than to erect a finished building.

Notes to Chapter 1

- 1 In this dissertation "self" refers to "human being" (as does "person", "individual", "agent", and many others). "Self" indicates that discrete entity which experientially is felt to be separate from the rest of the world, the other-than-self or, more simply, the other. Human others are thus selves also. To this extent "self" and "person" are virtually interchangeable terms. On the other hand there are good reasons for rejecting their equivalence. (See note 10 below) Nevertheless if the reader will regard "self" as one member of the self-other pair and accept that no other meaning is implied than the distinction suggested by this usage no misunderstanding should arise.
- 2 For example, Macmurray 1956, 1961; Scheler, 1954; Gauld and Shotter, 1977.
- 3 As I have already indicated in the prologue a larger undertaking, e.g. an exploration of the proper task of a social psychology of the person, would demand a more convincing and rigorous analysis of the concepts employed.
- 4 Harre and Secord, 1972; Blumer, 1969; Goffman, 1969a, 1969b, 1972; come readily to mind. The uncritical and ubiquitous adoption of role theoretical language by experts and lay people alike offers further evidence of the obfuscating influence of the dramaturgical perspective.
- 5 Section 2.1 and its subsequent subsections suggest how this might be done.
- 6 Several theorists have applied themselves to resolving the confusion. For example, Shotter, 1975, examined the concepts of person, agency and action and later with Gauld (Gauld and Shotter, 1977) developed a systematic critique of positivist psychological science introducing a subtler distinction between self and person and importing ideas from hermeneutics and phenomenology such as intention, intentionality (and intensionality) and subjectivity. Thines, 1977, summarised the work of those who seek an authentic scientific psychology founded on the twin pillars of biology and phenomenology. Pur-

pose, action, agency, subjectivity are linked to the life of organisms moving about in (and constituting) their lived world, their natural habitat. For some reason these workers are found in continental Europe: Holland, Belgium, Germany and France. Sherrington, 1952, however, is a major source of inspiration. Harré, 1983, not only explores more thoroughly than any other student of personal being the difference between person and self but he also erects an analytical framework for construing the psychological properties of persons which at the same time clarifies the social character of personal being. He calls upon a process described in the child development literature as psychological symbiosis to explain the genesis of personhood. I call it empathy but whereas Harré's notion includes a "moral order" mine does not. Thines and Harré remind us that notions such as person and self may be culturally determined. (Note 10 below). Paul Ricoeur has done for hermeneutics what Schutz did for phenomenology. Whilst he clarifies the problems of hermeneutics (which Gauld and Shotter do not appear to consider) he also demonstrates the mutual dependency between hermeneutics and phenomenology. His importance for us is that like Thines he is concerned with the ontology and epistemology of understanding human expressiveness, Ricoeur in the study of human discourse, Thines in the study of human action. Harré seems to occupy a midway position since his focal point is a conversation which for him is any form of symbiotic interaction.

- 7 Throughout this dissertation but perhaps especially in Chapter 1 I frequently express myself positively, i.e. I assert that such-and-such is the case. In part this is due to a tendency to use Weber's notion of "ideal types" in order to sharpen distinctions between phenomena which, in the real world, tend to be less clearly manifested. In part it is due to a preference for clear, unambiguous statements; they may the more readily be shown to be wanting. Propositions which are constantly hedged round by qualifiers soon lose their import. The smoke-screen of justifications, exceptions and other limiting devices often defeats the point of the proposition. I am aware of the dangers of this tactic but I believe I have avoided them.

8 See section 1.4.

9 Inner and outer worlds of experience refer neither to subjective and objective data nor to inner and outer (physical) perception. The dichotomy refers to the meaning of the world as it presents itself to our senses. All of us, I suspect, are naive realists in our ordinary, everyday experience of the world. Things do happen and exist "out there" and we know they do because we perceive them so. On the other hand we are also daily reminded that our own perceptions may differ from the reports others give us of the same phenomena. Hence we become aware of our meanings of phenomena as distinct from meanings attributed to them by others. It is our meanings which make our world ours. This argument seems to me close to Harré's notion of private/individual vs. public/collective categories of psychological attributes. (See Harré, 1983, Chapter 3)

10 Harré attempts in *Personal Being* to trace the origins and the unique character of "person" and "self". The former is the centrepiece of the fact of personal identity; the latter is the theoretical concept relating to the sense of personal identity. Thus "while "person" is an empirical concept which distinguishes beings in a public-collective realm, "...self"...is a theoretical concept acquired in the course of social interactions."(p.26) The former is "the socially defined, publicly visible embodied being, endowed with all kinds of powers and capacities for public, meaningful action."(p.26) This is in sharp contrast to the self, "the personal unity I take myself to be, my singular inner being, so to speak."(p.26) Since one of Harré's basic premisses is that the structures and forms of consciousness are culturally determined, he is at pains to demonstrate that different cultures evolve different senses of personal identity. "Our personal being is created by our coming to believe a theory of self based on our society's working conception of a person."(p.26) In order to change one's personal being, therefore, "one must come to believe a theory of self derived from the concept of person current in another and different society."(p.26)

Persons are locations of speech acts (though Harré extends "speech acts" to include "any flow of interactions brought about through the use of a public semiotic system such as that involved in the mean-

ingful flying of flags, the wearing of uniforms, ballroom dancing, gestures and grimaces, a *concours d'élégance* and so on."(p.65) The primary, social and psychological reality is thus an array of embodied persons and their conversations (indexed by grammatical forms, e.g. pronouns, establishing the here and now analogue of physical time and place). The secondary psychological realities are human minds by which Harré means "a semi-sytematic cluster of sets of beliefs."(p.65)

Each of us is thus manifested in the two structures; grammatical devices (pronouns or their equivalents) locate us in both. In the primary structure they index speech acts in the array of persons (i.e., they identify a person); in the secondary structure they refer to a theoretical (believed in) entity: the self. This theoretical entity centres on the three unities of perspective, action and consciousness. "I" am at the centre of my world; "I" am the source of my actions; "I" am conscious of the continuity of my own history. The three "I"s are the same individual being: myself.

These two realities - the primary and secondary - are intimately related. "To realize that one is a person is to learn a way of thinking about and managing oneself. It is not to be prompted to make some kind of empirical discovery."(p.22) Putting the matter somewhat cryptically: personal being is some function of personhood and selfhood both of which are indexed by grammatical structures.

These brief excerpts must suffice to convey Harré's approach to delineating the two related concepts of person and self. I recognise the merit of his analysis but feel that for my rather more restricted purpose his distinction is not essential. For a psychology of personal being his kind of analysis obviously is.

- 11 I have in mind here and elsewhere in this dissertation a total configuration as the Gestalt psychologists understood the term rather than Husserl's essence. A real world phenomenon exhibits an expressiveness that characterises its individuality (its "thingness" or beingness) regardless of the specific context in which an observer experiences it. For example, as every student of painting knows or soon discovers, there are no red objects. There is undoubtedly a

colour we call red (in fact a range of such colours within which we may become aware with training and experience of many gradations) and redness is undoubtedly an attribute of some objects. On closer inspection, however, reflections, shadows, lights, and even optical illusions create the colour we actually see. A real and meaningful challenge to an artist is to render a so-called red object without using red pigment at all. Similar arguments could be applied to our experiences in other sense modalities. We are capable of grasping real world phenomena as they essentially are but typically we see without looking, hear without listening, perceive without entering into the essence of the phenomenon before us. In effect we do not really perceive at all but call upon prior knowledge of the phenomenon in question. What is true of inanimate objects is even truer of the living because the expressiveness of living things is far subtler. Artists and poets have not lost this ability to grasp the essence of phenomena but it is not a magical or mysterious gift denied to other mortals. One of the aims of this dissertation is to try to show how we might recover this facility.

12 See especially section 1.4.

13 See Chapter 2.

14 An empathising person is one who is willing and able to nurture the empathic relation. Whether this calls for special abilities and competences I do not explore in this work in any depth.

15 See section 1.43.

16 See section 2.21.

17 The findings of ethologists (e.g. Tinbergen, 1951; Hess, 1958, 1972; Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1970, 1972; Lorenz, 1966); developmental psychologists (e.g. Spitz, 1965; Kaye, 1982); philosophers of psychology (Midgely, 1978); the group of phenomenological biologists discussed by Thines, 1977; and students of emotions and feelings (e.g. Magda Arnold, 1968, 1970; Dunlop, 1983); all point to an innate ability to "read" at least some expressive signs of other living beings.

18 See section 2.37.

- 19 See note 11 above. What we know or imagine to be the case and a tendency to accord primacy to intellectual rather than intuitive knowledge are major causes of our loss of perceptual innocence.
- 20 I shall use the shorter expression henceforth to stand for awareness in passive (or active) consciousness where there is little chance of being misunderstood.
- 21 See notes 11 and 19 above.
- 22 Meynell, 1981; p.16.
- 23 See section 3.521 for distinctions between false and genuine identification, an idea which Stewart developed following Freud.
- 24 The relationship between curiosity and exploratory activity is far from clear. So also is the relationship between anxiety and exploration. In their review of the current status of curiosity and exploration Voss and Keller, 1983, find that curiosity tends to be viewed either as a motivational variable or as a personality characteristic whereas, they suggest, it should be accorded the status of a hypothetical construct mediating (in ways yet to be determined) exploratory behaviour which thus becomes a descriptive concept. Anxiety, they suggest, should also be construed as a hypothetical construct; perhaps in this case psychological states (subjects' reports of accompanying felt anxiety) may be correlated with physiological measures which then offer evidence of the hypothesised anxiety.
- Exploratory behaviour tends to be regarded as some function of hypothetical variables, e.g. neurophysiological, which activate the organism in some way; or cognitive variables such as schemata, hypotheses, etc., which somehow control an individual's information processing; or of stimulus variables, e.g. complexity, novelty, intensity. The authors wonder why investigators in this field have given scant attention to personality and cultural variables and to interactions between the various classes of hypothesised variables.

They review a number of models which attempt to show relations between curiosity, anxiety and exploratory behaviour (variously construed) and conclude that there are two main theoretical positions:

- 1 anxiety and exploratory behaviour are two diametrically opposed motivational systems, the sum of which influences the level of activation and thus serves to control behaviour;
- 2 anxiety is taken to be the sole motivational basis for exploration.

At present, they say, there is no way of deciding between them. One interesting distinction cited by Voss and Keller is that which Spielberger makes between diversive and specific exploration; the former tends to be associated with sensation-seeking, movement towards optimum level of arousal, etc., whereas the second is associated with what we would call action, i.e. conduct in conscious pursuit of intentions and purposes. In Spielberger's model diversive exploration is accompanied by an increasing but mild anxiety and a rapidly increasing curiosity drive which at its maximum creates the optimum level of hedonic tone. Here subjects subjectively experience the most satisfactory balance between anxiety and curiosity. The phase of specific exploration, however, is marked by a sharp increase in anxiety and subjects rapidly reach the point beyond which they experience conflict between anxiety and curiosity.

The point of this minor diversion is to justify my claim that fear of the foreign even if something called curiosity also functions may be universal. On the other hand the precise relationship between curiosity, anxiety and exploration has yet to be worked out and empirically supported.

- 25 See Berlyne, 1960; Vernon, 1961; Heron, Doane and Scott, 1956; Solomon, 1961; for effects of sensory deprivation. Voss and Keller, 1983 have reviewed the literature on curiosity and exploration. (See note 24 above.)

- 26 Stewart's *Thirst for Freedom* offers examples of imitation in action. His rather than Freud's illustrations are preferable because of their less theory-loaded character. Stewart worked with alcoholics and drug addicts within the ambience of empathic relations which despite his initial sympathy with Freudian theory actually owes very little to it. (See section 3.52)
- 27 Jean Liedloff, 1975.
- 28 The relation between sympathy and empathy is examined in section 2.3
- 29 Note the implied use of ideal types. See note 7 above.
- 30 Goodall, 1983; Gardner and Gardner, 1969; Linden, 1976. This tendency is, if anything, even more prevalent in the artificial intelligence literature. See Boden, 1977; Weizenbaum, 1976; Dreyfus, 1977; for copious examples drawn from a wide range of this literature.
- 31 Chapter 2 explores this relationship.
- 32 Such a task belongs to a psychology of personal being. Harre's exploitation of the concept of psychological symbiosis offers one illustration of how this might be done. Psychological symbiosis is not empathy (as I understand it) but is sufficiently like it to stress the point I am making. The hermeneutical movement in contrast is less convincing, though Paul Ricoeur's notions of distancing and belonging and their hypothesised relationship in a genuine hermeneutics look interesting for their similarity to my notion (borrowed from Scheler and Stewart) of unity in separateness.
- 33 Fromm, 1978; p.82
- 34 *ibid.* pp.82/83.
- 35 Stewart, 1965.
- 36 Fromm, 1978; p.92.
- 37 *ibid.* p.28.
- 38 *ibid.* p.29.
- 39 *ibid.* p.48.

2 SOME OUTSTANDING ISSUES CONCERNING EMPATHY

2.1 THE PROBLEM OF CLASSIFYING PERSONAL RELATIONS

As far as I can discover no one has attempted a comprehensive typology of personal relations. (1) What kind of personal relations are there? Freud was interested in the emotional ties people form with one another. Scheler analysed one class of emotional bonds to which he attached the generic label: fellow-feeling. He deliberately excluded empathy as a mistaken concept; he could find no place for what others called empathy in his schema. Freud himself mentioned empathy but only once though Jung treated it rather more generously. Both saw it as an emotional tie rooted in one of the ego defence mechanisms: identification or, as it is sometimes called, introjection. One conjecture, therefore, might be to subsume all personal relations under some such category, i.e. to assert that all are essentially emotional bonds grounded in ego defence mechanisms. Whilst this has some interesting possibilities (for example, all personal relations would be explicable within the theoretical framework of Freudian or Jungian psychoanalytic theory) it leaves out a wide range of personal relations which simply do not fit into these conceptual systems. Examples are to be found in chance encounters with others in bus queues, railway stations, shops and a hundred other places and situations. Fortuitous interpersonal relations are commonplace, frequent, sometimes stressful and often lead to more significant relations such as friendship, marriage or hostility. Accidental interpersonal relations cannot therefore be ignored as trivial or inconsequential though often they may be. Formal relations, e.g. doctor-patient, are likewise difficult to incorporate into a psychoanalytic schema.

Another way of classifying personal relations is to distinguish between those involving other human beings and those which focus on non-human others. The first category include interpersonal relations; let us call the second simply non-human relations. Personal relations thus consist of two non-overlapping sets each one uniquely labelled. In what ways may persons relate to non-humans, and similarly in what ways may they relate to one another?

Using my own analysis we could start with ways of knowing: personal, scientific, aesthetic, practical, etc., and further suppose that each is independent of the others insofar as each has a specific field of relevance unique to itself. I have also suggested that a particular human being may, on a particular occasion, be construed as a biological machine, or as an organism, or as a psychophysical individual, or as a person. In this dissertation "person" has a special meaning which does not allow us to interchange it with, say, "individual" or even "human being". However the words "interpersonal" and "personal" are often used in the psychological literature as descriptors of relations among human beings or human individuals understood in a general sense. Thus we could try to fill in the matrix formed by the two axes: forms of knowing, and ways of construing members of the human species. Each cell constitutes a potential category of interpersonal relation if we assume that both axes refer to the point of view of a specific knower. Exploring the cells of this matrix provides another opportunity to extend further our understanding of the empathic relation.

Ways of knowing	Construal of human being			
	Biological mechanism	Organism	Psychophysical individual	Person
Personal				
Scientific				
Aesthetic				
Practical				
etc.				

2.11 Personal knowing

To enquire into the nature of the contents of the first cell in the matrix we imagine that A strives to know B as a person (the way of personal knowing) and does so whilst construing B as a biological mechanism. This seems inconsistent with my previous argument. To try to know and understand someone as a person is not in keeping with an approach which reduces that human being to a biological machine. In the first the aim is to enhance, *inter alia*, the other's personal identity, to show goodwill and respect towards the other. In the second the aim appears to be to disregard the personal in favour of the objective study of the person's body viewed as a mechanism. In an earlier section I examined the possibility of entering into an empathic relation with non-human entities. I concluded that within my conception of empathy such a relation was impossible. However, by analogy I argued that a quasi-empathic relation was feasible because the essential processes were identical with those encountered in empathy though some obvious features were missing. Striving to know and understand persons as persons has its analogy in trying to know and understand objects as objects; personhood and beinghood are similar. The attitude of openness, and the processes of experiencing their givenness and enhancing their individual and separate identities are the same.

It therefore seems reasonable to argue that one self may try to know another as a biological machine but in the spirit of, and by the methods associated with, personal knowing. In other words a self embarking on such an enterprise would be entering into a quasi-empathic relation with the other instead of, or rather alternating with, the authentic empathic relation. It might be objected at this point that I appear to be confusing a form of personal enquiry with scientific knowing, that to try to know and understand a human being as a biological machine is the proper task of science. As I will try to show later the two types of enquiry, personal knowing and scientific knowing, are entirely different.

Why should anyone want to know another human being as a biological mechanism in the spirit of personal knowing? One obvious answer is to say that for the empathising person the other's body must be more important at a particular moment than his or her person but not to the extent of denying the other the maximum respect and goodwill which are possible in the circumstances. Consider two lovers. Suppose they enter into an empathic relation. Insofar as they explore, discover and enhance their own and their partner's separate identities while experiencing a deep sense of unity between them they could be said to be transcending or going beyond their experience of merely physical beingness, either their own or the other's. But in making love this cannot be so, or at least not entirely so, by the very nature of the experience. It could well happen that, as part of the joy of love-making, each might, at a particular moment, delight in the other's body as a pure mechanism. If they are to preserve their non-manipulative approach to one another they must of necessity, it seems to me, engage in a quasi-empathic relation with each other in which their bodies as mechanisms become objects of their stance of openness, of their spontaneous experience of givenness and so on. In this sense it seems to me quite proper to speak of a kind of personal knowing of a person's body. The result is the alternation between the empathic and the quasi-empathic relation. I have already described the latter in section 1.51.

Another example comes from a personal experience of a medical examination required by law under the Factory Acts. I was 15 years old starting my first job at an engineering works. I was given 7/6 (37.5p) for the doctor's fee. The examination was swift, rough and I suppose as thorough as the fee merited. A prize pig at a cattle market or a horse at the knacker's yard would probably have fared as well. My surviving impressions of this encounter are the alacrity with which the doctor pocketed the fee and his total indifference to me as a person. To him I was no more than a piece of meat on the hoof to be disposed of as quickly as possible. Nowadays the training of doctors, nur-

ses, physiotherapists, radiographers stresses the need to treat patients as persons, though with what results has yet to be established. Nevertheless patients must be examined and it is their machinery which is in for repair. While approaching persons as persons we cannot at the same time be viewing them as defective mechanisms. The ideal solution is surely to alternate between the empathic and the quasi-empathic relation. Obviously in real life medical personnel may not attempt, or consider, or even know about empathic relations with their patients; if they do, then the quasi-empathic relation is a necessary one to enter into in order to carry out their professional tasks without harm either to their own personhoods (the doctor who dealt with me could hardly feel proud of himself) or to those of their patients.

Similar arguments apply to the next two cells in the personal knowing row. Organism differs from biological machine in that the former implies, indeed logically requires, acknowledgement and consideration of an environment. A biological mechanism differs from a non-living mechanism only in its livingness (which is not, of course, to imply that such a difference is trivial) but it is not necessary to go much beyond the boundaries of the living entity in order to study it as a machine. Since to study an organism is to study the entity as a whole, the idea of wholeness has little meaning in the absence of an environment in which the entity functions. A social worker may establish an empathic relation with the client yet feel the need to know this person as a functioning organism within a particular context or situation. The client's welfare as an organism, that is to say, may be just as important to the social worker as an understanding of the other as a person especially if the social worker feels that some kind of remedial action is necessary in order to protect the client's well-being. In the case of physical or mental handicap this may be obvious but other situations are apparently less transparent as some recent and much publicised misadventures with vulnerable persons in the care of social workers have demonstrated. The fate of the

elderly living alone, children subject to abuse by parents or other adults, young girls in care are some examples where critics have argued that environmental factors were not sufficiently taken into account by those responsible for their welfare.

An architect designing a village may need to discover the movements, relations, the social habits and needs of clients.(2)

Assuming that the architect has established an empathic relation with at least some of the villagers he or she, like the social worker, might still feel the need to grasp the village as a set of interacting organisms while pursuing the personal form of knowing. In other words the social worker and the architect in these examples would be striving to establish quasi-empathic relations with a specific human object: an organism, a biological machine functioning within an environment, viewed non-manipulatively and with respect and goodwill according to the organism's beingness.

And so with psychophysical individuals which are organisms with minds. It would be interesting to speculate how far below the human level we might go before rejecting "psychophysical" as a valid descriptor for an organism. I shall not attempt such an enquiry but suggest instead that, as humans are our prime concern, we had better concentrate on what personal knowing amounts to when its human object is regarded as an organism equipped with a mind and therefore capable of enjoying a mental as well as a physical existence. The outcome is the same as in the two previous cases: a non-manipulative grasping of the beingness of a particular human being as a psychophysical individual. A therapist might choose to examine the attitudes, or feelings, or motives of a client or patient, which seem functionally important in a particular environment in the sense that the therapist sees them as essential properties of the client's coping strategies within a specific context. In other words the therapist thinks that these psychophysical elements form a vital part of the phenomenal object: the patient. In these circumstances, if the therapist has already established an empathic relation with the client then he or she might also

feel the need to explore the client not as a person but as a psychophysical individual. The attitude system, or the set of feelings, or the motives may, for reasons best known to the therapist, seem to be important in their own right whilst yet belonging to this particular individual organism and explicable only as construed in this way. It is in this sense that I can understand and accept Carl Rogers' idea of moving about in the other's world as if it were my own "but never forgetting the "as if" quality". He called this empathy; I call it establishing a quasi-empathic relation with a psychophysical individual. This non-manipulative activity, like all the others we have discussed, is not at all the same as the scientific study of the same phenomena. This latter is, as we shall see, an over-against relation and totally suppresses the person as not merely irrelevant but as actively subversive of the scientific enterprise.

To summarise, we may interpret personal knowing of one self by another construed as mechanism, organism or psychophysical individual by imagining the empathising self alternating between striving to know and understand the other as a person and trying to know and understand him or her as one or other of these different ways of construing human beings; i.e. alternating between empathy and quasi-empathy. The choice of relation will obviously depend on the empathising self's interests and concerns but in every case the stance of non-manipulative openness towards the other, the spontaneous experience of the other's givenness and the enhancement of goodwill, respect and the other's beingness are characteristic.

2.12 Personal knowing and empathy

There is no need to discuss the last cell in the personal knowing row since Chapter 1 was devoted to it. Before moving on to the next row we might attempt to answer the question: does the effort for personal knowing inevitably lead to empathy? Clearly the answer must be, no. However dedicated the empathiser may be, however skilled in cultivating the stance of openness to the real world, however filled with love for all things especially human beings, the empathising

self is fallible and will sometimes make mistakes, give way to ennui, fall victim to upsets of one kind or another. Also the other will sometimes prove to be intractable: the bigot, the psychopath, the ideologically committed, the gangster and similar deeply negatively orientated individuals, who seem beyond the reach of empathising persons. They appear to lack the resources on which to draw in order to match even remotely the goodwill and respect which the empathiser accords to them. The brutal, extremist, dismissive stance is a virtually impregnable defence though not entirely so. Recent experience in dealing with terrorists who use innocent victims as bargaining counters suggests that it is sometimes possible to find a chink in the armour of this kind of defensive individual.

Finally we may ask whether the empathic relation is necessary in the first three cells of the personal knowing row (as a precursor to the quasi-empathic relation). The answer again must be, no. One can imagine an observer attempting to establish a quasi-empathic relation with the other as a biological machine, as an organism, or as a psychophysical individual without trying to foster an authentic empathic relation. I think it might be odd but it is certainly possible. Such a person might, for instance, have emotional difficulties in relating to others as persons or may be less skilful in the empathic relation. Quasi-empathic relations are, after all, only one-sided whereas empathic relations are potentially mutual. In any event, interaction in the empathic relation is always two-way. This does lead to an important difficulty. In the one-sided quasi-empathic relation, in which the self adopts the (empathic) processes of openness, spontaneous experience of the other's givenness, showing respect and goodwill to the other viewed as a mechanism, organism or psychophysical individual, the other will, of course, frequently respond as a person. Thus the relation is interactive but if the observer is incompetent or for some other reason unable to cope with the other as a person the relation might easily become tense and, from the other's point of view, distasteful. The result may well be a dissolution of the relation leaving a residue of ill-feeling in its wake.

This state of affairs highlights one of the major differences between empathy and quasi-empathy with human beings. Within the empathic relation the development of a quasi-empathic approach to the other, construed from one of the three perspectives just described, is unlikely to cause distress; on the contrary the outcome is enhancement for both partners of the relation. Outside the empathic relation, however, quasi-empathy may inadvertently lead to a worsening of the observer's approach to others as persons with consequent loss for the other. It therefore seems to me that success in quasi-empathy outside the empathic relation will depend on the other's ability and willingness to initiate empathy in order to save the relation from dissolution. In the situations we have been exploring, involving doctors, social workers and therapists, the other may not be equipped to undertake such a task. My conclusion is that while anyone of goodwill and an attitude of openness may try to initiate a quasi-empathic relation with another human being from one of the non-personal perspectives we have studied, he or she is unlikely to be successful if the other is in any way problematical unless the observer has already established an empathic relation with the other. Persons do not fragment themselves into the categories I have used in this analysis; only observers do this and then only for specific reasons. It therefore behoves anyone undertaking such an attempt first to ensure that they are capable of coping with human beings as persons and secondly to examine critically and justify their motives for engaging in the enterprise. I have argued that to cope with human beings as persons non-manipulatively is to try to enter into an empathic relation with them. Of course it is clearly possible to learn how to cope with people through social skills training but then, I suggest, the learner would be in danger of becoming a manipulator of others though possibly for the noblest of motives: to do them good.

2.13 Aesthetic knowing

An artist drawing a nude model may have a special interest in the body of his or her subject viewed as a mechanism. Artists want to know how the body is put together, how the muscles relate to one another, how bone structure gives clues about muscle function and

movement in order to understand the character of the pose. But the artist is probably more interested in form and structure for their own sakes rather than as sources of answers to scientific questions.(3)

Because the aesthetic and scientific forms of knowing are similar in some respects though very different in others it might be useful to consider them together for a moment. In both there is an over-against relation between the observer and the observed in which their separateness takes the form of detachment. The artist-designer's study of the relation between form and context is just as objective as the scientist-technologist's study of the interaction between selected variables. If artists are concerned with the "goodness of fit" between the functions of the biological mechanism and the form which serves these functions, they may also want to enquire why this particular form evolved out of the infinite set of solutions which are possible. Even if they ignore this type of problem they will nevertheless concern themselves with questions centring on the character of the form-context relation. Scientist-technologists, however, are more interested in lawful relations between variables. Replication, prediction, control are their areas of interest. Both may adopt a severely intellectualist approach and both will depend necessarily on intuitive experience of the phenomenal object as a source of knowledge. In practice artists are, or seem to be, more receptive to intuitive processes and to be more open in their approach to phenomena than scientists (though probably no less selective in their choice of what they consider worth attending to) whereas scientist-technologists seem happier with more rational, analytical approaches which rely on formal logic, systematic procedures and repeatable, verifiable processes. Both the artist and the scientist can adopt the aesthetic and scientific ways of knowing (and, I suggest, the most creative do) but in practice each chooses the one he or she feels more appropriate to their (deliberately) rather restricted view of their respective undertakings.

Thus both can adopt an impersonal approach to human beings whether they regard the object of study as a biological machine, or organism, or psychophysical individual. To the extent that they do so the

end product will always be an expression of an over-against relation. Thus we may say of a particular artist's work that his portraits or renderings of historical events are ironic or apt social comment yet they lack a sense of personal involvement. Guy de Maupassant has often been criticised for his cool detachment from the characters and events in his stories, superbly drawn though they undoubtedly are. It is a continuing source of wonder that some scientist-technologists engage in work that ensures the greatest harm and suffering to other human beings. Impersonality here is taken to the extreme. Purely human considerations would undermine their work and therefore must not only be ignored; they must be actively suppressed.

Aesthetic knowing is concerned with the patterns observed among real world phenomena but always from the point of view that, in any particular case, the marriage between form and context represents the selection of one solution from a theoretically infinite set of possibilities. Aesthetic knowing may therefore be construed as trying to know and understand the uniqueness of the particular goodness of fit which confronts the observer either as something to be achieved or as an actual product. It seems to me that the artist-designer may approach this uniqueness in three ways. The first is the impersonal approach I have just described which in most respects is indistinguishable from that of the scientist-technologist. The major difference is the centre of interest: the uniqueness of the particular form-context "fit" preoccupying the artist-designer. The human being in this case is personless; all that counts is the analysis of the phenomenal object, the recording of what is observed, the construction of an expressive object (which may, of course, be functional such as a building or an instrument), in short the creation of a work which expresses the uniqueness thus observed. Medical illustrators, forensic photographers, designers of ergonomic artifacts, as well as painters working in this frame of mind offer visual examples of the genre. Leonardo da Vinci's notebooks are full of material inspired by this objective approach.

The second approach is to adopt a quasi-empathic relation with the human being under observation, in the manner and with the consequen-

ces I have already described in the preceding sections devoted to the personal knowing row of the matrix. In aesthetic knowing as with personal knowing the viewing of a human being from the perspectives of mechanism, organism and psychophysical individual is best conducted within an alternation between empathy and quasi-empathy. Do the expressive products emerging from these three approaches differ significantly? The only one I can vouch for and indeed clearly imagine is the impersonal approach; as I have suggested products of artist-designers working in this mode tend to convey to others a feeling of aloofness, coldness, sometimes even indifference. It is frequently difficult to detect the human heart behind the work. In the case of quasi-empathy and the ills which attend it when separated from authentic empathy one might conjecture that its products would express a sense of confusion or unease or disorientation in the spectator if the artist-designer had difficulties with his or her model. This is entirely speculative but some artists are well-known for their inadequacies in coping with personal relations so a study of their work from this perspective may prove worthwhile. The third approach, the quasi-empathic relation in conjunction with empathy, offers the obvious route to aesthetic knowing of the uniqueness of a particular form. Because the purposes and phenomenal objects of personal knowing and aesthetic knowing are different the artist, like the architect, the social worker, the therapist, would alternate between concern with the model as a person and interest in the model as a body (that unique solution to the problem of finding the "best" fit of form and context) both conducted non-manipulatively and involving the processes I have discussed at length.

I will not attempt to describe the next two cells in this row since the arguments I have already used will apply in their cases also. The psychological complexity of the phenomenal object from the observer's point of view increases as we move along the row because the range of elements and their interrelations which constitute the phenomenal object increases. This complexity also becomes more social and therefore aesthetic products are likely to express a greater range of understanding as the focus shifts in the direction of the person. The artist-designer's concern with human beings in their en-

vironment (the organismic perspective) or with the portrayal of their feelings and attitudes especially towards the living and specifically human environment (the psychophysical) is likely to convey to the spectator a richer, more human sensitivity than is found in the treatment of the human being as a biological machine.(4) Commentary on the last cell in the row of aesthetic knowing is deferred until section 2.16.

2.14 Scientific knowing and empathy

In the cells associated with scientific knowing we meet the same impersonal, quasi-empathic and empathic relations (the last two alternating in the ideal case) that we have just explored in the analysis of aesthetic knowing. The focus of scientific knowing is the discovery and understanding of the lawful relations between elements in the real world. The aim is to control and predict the behaviour of real world phenomena. This, unlike the aesthetic case, is surely necessarily manipulative. The artist-designer may manipulate the human subject of his or her enquiries in the quest for understanding the goodness of fit, but he does not have to, whereas it seems to be in the nature of scientific knowing to manipulate. Can a scientist carry out an experiment involving human beings without treating them as objects which are there solely to satisfy his scientific curiosity? The answer seems to me to depend on the underlying attitude of the scientist. The number of experiments is legion in which answers to questions have been sought with total disregard not only for the personhoods of the human subjects but in complete indifference to their beingness as biological mechanisms, as organisms, or as psychophysical individuals. In short, in scientific knowing the tradition is to reduce the interpersonal relation between a scientist and a human subject to an impersonal one between an observer and a non-human (though living) object. Thus a living human body may be treated no better (nor necessarily any worse) than cattle, say, in studies of the effects of different foods; or the human organism may become an alternative (perhaps a more interesting one) to a rat in a Skinner box type of experiment; or a psychophysical individual may be regarded as no more than an essential ingredient in, say, a study of individual differences in response latencies. Scientists in these

situations go to great lengths to minimise the effects of their subjects' personhoods.

Nowadays a number of investigators especially in the social and social psychological sciences are suggesting that not only may this be wrong (morally and scientifically) but that it is quite often unnecessary not to say meaningless. Some questions are best answered by taking the human subject into the scientist's confidence; in any event human subjects who willingly take part in certain kinds of investigation may contribute their own creative ideas and so, despite the efforts of the investigator, shift the study on to a more interesting, and possibly more profitable, path. In many areas such as education, or the study of small groups, or in the investigation of interactive processes between human beings the research project must allow for the activity of the human subjects as agents since this aspect cannot be eliminated or controlled (despite the beliefs of the scientific community to the contrary). Human agency is an ineradicable feature of these types of experimental situations. Action research is one method of conducting these kinds of studies. Quite apart from these and similar considerations there remains the fact which we have met before: that in the scientific study of the human being as mechanism, organism or psychophysical individual the investigator may adopt the same stance of openness, experience the same spontaneous givenness of the other, act with the same respect and goodwill towards the other and in general enhance the beingness of the mechanism, organism or individual as I have tried to show is possible in the cases of the personal and aesthetic knowing of these phenomenal objects. As in these instances so in scientific knowing the observer may alternate between quasi-empathy and empathy though the first is possible without the second even if fraught with dangers as we have seen. Scientific knowing of the person, the last cell in this row of the matrix, will be examined in 2.16.

2.15 Practical knowing and empathy

We now come to the practical form of knowing. This is the kind of knowing which resides in performance. Learning to ride a bicycle cannot be achieved by sheer intellectual effort. Psychomotor skills have to be learned by actually doing something, however badly, until

the learner discovers intuitively, often after many errors, the knack of carrying out the correct movements or at least those movements which lead to the desired performance. Language and social skills have a similar character, though theorising may be of some value especially in the advanced stages of learning these skills. Practice does not guarantee improved performance but it is certain that increased competence is impossible without practice. What practice does (and I mean informed practice) is to equip the performer with an ever-growing repertoire of appropriate responses limited only by the range of situations which the individual experiences or by the performer's achieved competences. I assume that the learner is willing and ready to learn. Similarly with cognitive tasks a learner must acquire a range of procedures and techniques relevant to the tasks he or she wishes to carry out. As with psychomotor, linguistic and social skills these become habitual with practice and in a similar way the performer's competence in their use increases.

Practical knowing may be construed as the connective tissue binding the other forms of knowing since all forms of knowing are manifested in action; performance depends in part on what we might call relatively low order skills such as the use of language, writing, various operating techniques, the use of instruments and tools, and so on. Moreover a certain degree of automaticity is desirable. In a theoretical discussion we would want to devote most of our attention to the essential ideas; we would find it irksome and disruptive if words did not come readily to our lips on command, a common experience if the debate is in a language other than our native tongue, or if the theme of the discussion is new to us and we lack an appropriate conceptual framework or technical lexicon.

The extensive range of practical knowledge we all need is best acquired within the specific fields of their application. For example, we learn how to handle language in an "academic" way by writing essays, parsing sentences, carrying out precis exercises or paraphrasing. Nowadays this grammar-book approach is frowned upon because it breeds the idea that language is somehow glued on to other subjects. Obviously the rules and traditions of a language are important in their own right and constitute a proper subject matter to study but

linguistic skill resides in its everyday use; therefore it is the use of language in real world activities that needs to be cultivated. Using words to describe an experiment in physics, to comment on a news item, to explain how something works, are ways of putting language to work in specific situations. The point I am stressing here is that practical knowledge becomes an arid and often meaningless piece of mental equipment if divorced from its proper setting; nevertheless this knowledge is necessary if we are to cope with the demands society thrusts upon us as workers, parents, friends, voters, thinkers, and so on. In the example of the theoretical discussion in a foreign language, for instance, competence is perhaps best achieved by engaging in frequent discussions of these self-same theoretical problems with the help of a skilled linguist who is also knowledgeable about the subject matter under discussion. Ready-to-hand, tacit knowledge is essential in every domain.

What does it mean to know another in the practical form of knowing described above? It means having at one's beck and call the ready-to-hand skills appropriate to the kind of knowing which concerns us in relation to a specific perspective of the human being under scrutiny: mechanism, organism, individual or person, and within an impersonal, quasi-empathic or empathic relation. The bottom row of the matrix is of special interest to educators, teachers, instructors and self-improvers. The drawing up of sets of basic skills is now a major concern since forty years of compulsory state education have proved inadequate to equip our children with the basic necessities of adult citizenship. What counts as a basic skill and how basic is basic are no longer trivial matters.

2.16 The person and various forms of knowing

In the preceding sections I have ignored the final cell in each row apart from a reminder that personal knowing of the person was the theme of Chapter 1. Is it possible to know and understand another as a person from a scientific perspective? Trivially we might observe that we can approach anything from the scientific point of view but what does that mean when the person (in the special sense of this dissertation) is the focus of interest? My view is that such a study

represents the proper science of psychology in contrast to the deterministic (and commonly behaviouristic) orthodoxies of the present day. Whilst it is true that Kelly in his personal construct theory put the person at the centre of the stage and moreover produced a reflexive psychology (i.e. a psychological explanation of humankind which includes the theorist in its schema) he nevertheless produced a peculiarly biased view. According to Kelly all humans behave as scientists and adopt, however imperfectly, what amounts to a scientific attitude in their intercourse with the real world however humble a particular activity may be within the total panorama of their lives. It is implicit in his theory that humans are agents and not merely reactive mechanisms at the mercy of environmental stimuli or internal drives. Rogers and Maslow in their very different ways have also attempted to perfect the notion of an active agent at work yet neither has succeeded in grasping the significance of the personal.(5) They both stress, however, the role of experience in the development of the person and both emphasise, as did Kelly, the central importance of personal growth within any theory claiming to be a human psychology. John Shotter has outlined a possible psychology of the person(6) inspired by the philosopher John Macmurray who in the early 50s presented a theoretical analysis of "the form of the personal" as he called it.(7) John Rowan has elaborated a new approach to a study of persons in action which is scientific in the traditional sense yet avoids the pernicious doctrine that humans as persons interfere with the "purity" of the investigation and hence muddy the data and diminish the likelihood that objective, valid and reliable conclusions can be drawn.(8) Harré's recent work offers one philosopher's view of personal psychology.(9)

Sociology, anthropology, economics, political science, social psychology and educational science may all be directed at the person, at the self as agent, despite the fact that any particular science may put other entities at the centre of the stage by reason of its own nature and scope. Some approaches in this direction include symbolic interactionism(10), which stresses action (an important property of persons), ethnomethodology which explores the trivia of everyday life as it happens(11), and the dramaturgical approach to social behaviour(12). The fact that they also have serious shortcomings does

not detract from their refreshing "personal" slant. Areas of study where the person barely figures at all include management theory, the study of human relations and especially industrial relations.

Is it possible to observe the triple division of approaches into impersonal, quasi-empathic and empathic in the scientific knowing of the person? The impersonal attitude to the person is the over-against relation of the observer to the person. In an authentic science of the person methods of enquiry would still need to maintain the over-against relation. What would be different would be the phenomenon under study. In itself the distance advocated and observed by scientists in their relations with the objects of their studies is not a "bad" thing. The false note is introduced (when it does occur) by the assumption that in an over-against relation all forms of the personal must be eliminated, or reduced to a minimum, in order to preserve the correct objectivity and purity of the investigation. Thus in the conventional comparative evaluation of two ways of teaching, the feelings, wishes, attitudes, etcetera, of the participants are often regarded as sources of random variation which clever experimental design tries to cancel out. In the person-centred paradigm, however, these features would be treated as important variables and steps taken to evaluate them. These steps would necessarily express the over-against relation towards the hypothesised variables insofar as the study were conceived as a scientific enterprise. A psychology of the person is not a sloppy, anything goes affair. Its methods would be no less scientific than those practised within the current deterministic psychologies. Only the content, the subject matter, would be different. (The specific techniques employed would also be different but these differences in no way invalidate the points I am making here.) The principal element of the subject matter would be the person with all that that entails.

The quasi-empathic approach to the person is redundant since the empathic relation is always potentially available. In any scientific study of the person, that is to say, the observer would alternate between the impersonal and the empathic relation. The point about the quasi-empathic relation in the case of the other three conceptualisations of a human being is that it offers an alternative to

the impersonal in which the human being is reduced to an object. By adopting a quasi-empathic approach the investigator behaves towards his or her human subject: the biological mechanism, the organism, the psychophysical individual, with respect and goodwill. The main problem we explored in discussing these cases is that the investigator may find it difficult to sustain this attitude if the human subject behaves in ways which the investigator cannot cope with, that is, behaves like a person. That is why I suggested that the ideal arrangement in dealing with these three phenomenal objects is to alternate between the empathic and the quasi-empathic relations.

In aesthetic knowing similar arguments apply. Aesthetic knowing of persons is concerned with the goodness of fit of form and context in which the person under study represents the form and the situation in which the person is operating the context. The total configuration of person and situation is the object of concern but from the particular aesthetic point of view: the unique order that this ensemble of person and situation represents and expresses. The fields in which aesthetic knowing of the person plays a major role include psychotherapy and counselling, career guidance (especially for those contemplating a change of career), organisational design, job design and personnel selection, vocational planning, and management. I doubt whether in our society there is much likelihood of a shift from current practices in some of these areas towards an approach based on an appreciation of the person through aesthetic knowing, yet it would be a relatively simple matter to move in that direction for those willing to make the effort.

In the practical knowing of the person the focus of effort is on knowing and understanding what in practice a person is and how he or she may be enhanced. It is concerned with personal growth, with the nurturance of personhood. It tries to answer questions such as: how does one strive to know and understand a person as a person? What skills are needed and how may they be acquired and perfected? How does one behave non-manipulatively towards another? This is the domain of a genuinely human pedagogy and one in which teaching and learning are most likely to be constructively and productively in harmony. (13)

2.2 A REVISED SCHEMA FOR CLASSIFYING PERSONAL RELATIONS

We have examined a three-dimensional framework for distinguishing different kinds of personal relation though admittedly from a single point of view: that of knowing. All personal relations except chance encounters are purposeful but it would be surprising if striving to know and understand were the only purpose underlying them.(14) This point we must take up again in a moment. One dimension of our conceptual framework refers to the membership of the relation, i.e. interpersonal or non-human. The matrix is concerned solely with the first of these. In the former the members are human beings; in the latter the other-than-self is non-human and may also be non-living. The second dimension focusses on the ways of knowing and the third represents the four conceptualisations of human beings: biological mechanism, organism, psychophysical individual and person. We concluded that three relations are necessary to account for all the possible entries in the matrix which we considered: impersonal, quasi-empathic and genuinely empathic. Quasi-empathy is the equivalent of empathy if beinghood replaces personhood as the focus of the

Construal of human being

Ways of knowing	Biological mechanism	Organism	Psychophysical individual	Person
Personal	Empathy alternating with quasi-empathy			Empathy
Scientific)	Impersonal; or empathy alternating with quasi-empathy			
Aesthetic)				
Practical	Basic skills			

knower's interest in the phenomenal object. Now non-human objects can be included in this schema provided we understand the four conceptualisations of human beings analogously in the case of non-human objects. That is to say, we can imagine that trying to know and understand non-human objects in the four ways of knowing will produce the two categories: impersonal and quasi-empathic relations, regardless of the nature of the object. Mechanisms, mechanisms in contexts

(environments), individual variations among mechanisms in contexts, and beings seem reasonably analogous categories; they even provide for the possibility of introducing mental components into the third and fourth categories where this is appropriate, e.g. higher animals especially the primates and human artifacts such as cities, farms, buildings, organisations. Poets and writers especially have written of the individual character or spirit of a place and we might therefore hypothesise that they have entered into a quasi-empathic relation with a particular habitat. The analogy is stretched to distortion point when we deal with abstract ideas and "objects" such as feelings, emotions and other psychological property.

Thus far we have four personal relations which are clearly distinguishable: impersonal, quasi-empathic, empathic and fortuitous. What other purposes than knowing are important to human beings? What has become of the emotional bonds we form with others? Love, as we have seen, underlies empathy and in a later section devoted to emotional bonds we shall return to the role of love. Suffice it to say here that love is not a purpose but an act or movement towards another which imparts a distinctive character to the resulting (non-manipulative, non-judgemental, non-attributive) relation.(15)

One alternative purpose we might suggest is to control, to exploit the phenomenal object (which, as we have seen, does not necessarily prevent an individual making some effort to know and understand it as well). The power relation appears to be more prevalent than the others except perhaps the fortuitous. Even here members may soon succumb to the power relation according to data from studies of leaderless groups. Another alternative centres on the deliberate introduction of distancing mechanisms which, unlike those used in the impersonal relation, are not concerned with knowing but with ordering the social world so as to reduce its latent ambiguity and uncertainty. Ownership, rights and rites are typical contents of what I shall call the formal relation. The formal relation includes the expert-client relationship which occurs in many fields; many examples can be observed in our society. In addition we can find others such as contractual: employer-employee, husband-wife; dominance (in the sense of legitimate authority): parent-child, teacher-

student; and ritual: clergy-laity, priest-acolyte. Note that a dominance relation does not necessarily imply or lead to a power relation but the danger of so doing is always present. Of course two people may enter into many different relations but not simultaneously; if they try to do so then some confusion of purposes usually results. Marital and work relations often demonstrate this lack of clarity about which type of relation matters at any particular moment. In contrast informal relations relax the rules and procedures sufficiently to allow the distancing requirement to be met but at the members' choosing. I, like you, will decide how far I will permit our tentative friendship to grow and in what direction.

It may be useful to construe the personal life-space of an individual as made up of three zones. The "free" zone is that which an individual admits to self and others as open to all knowers. The "negotiable" zone is that which is available to others only by negotiation. No one may presume to pry into this zone without permission which is to be considered wholly within the gift of the individual to dispense at will (though perhaps not without explanation on any particular occasion especially if permission is refused. Arbitrariness is not allowed; with that exception the rule of exclusiveness applies). Finally there is the "forbidden" zone where transgressors will be prosecuted, and justly. The three zones are not fixed. They may vary from one situation to another, from one moment to the next because of mood, feelings, change of or in the other, and so on. The boundaries may also fluctuate. Thus not only may the contents of any zone change over time but existing contents may move from one zone to another. What one individual may permit a close friend or relative to know may well be forbidden to a stranger or casual acquaintance. The same discrimination applies to action. In empathy we may learn to know all three zones, to be aware of the unpredictable changes that may occur in them, and to appreciate the importance of the contents of the zones for shared action with their owner.

Informal relations may blossom into empathy if the members can find enough goodwill and bring to them or discover the stance of openness

and a non-manipulative approach in order to initiate the empathic relation; nevertheless they are much closer to the formal than to any of the other relations. They do not of themselves stem from a striving to know and understand others but rather from a desire on the part of participants to regulate their distance from others in an orderly way yet relaxed enough to be sensitive to changing circumstances, moods and inclinations. Formal and informal relations may be exploited in order to avoid the purer, loving and more demanding relation of empathy. People can hide behind them, find fulfilment in them but also pay a price in diminished emotional satisfaction, inhibited personal growth and limited enhancement of both the self and the other-than-self.

We now have seven conceptually distinct types of personal relation, some of which may in practice overlap, especially the formal, impersonal and power relations:

empathic	formal
quasi-empathic	informal
impersonal	power
fortuitous	

It could be argued that the first two are really variants of one relation; similarly the formal and informal could be construed as variants of a single type. As I am investigating the nature of empathy my concern with other personal relations is solely to appreciate the better the unique character of empathy. Other approaches to the analysis of personal relations might well lead to different and more useful sets of categories. I justify mine on the grounds of their relevance to empathy (which I regard as the peak experience for human beings; my reasons form the content of Chapter 1), and because my set centre on ideas of involvement, respect for the beingness of things, emotional distance, commitment and above all on knowing and understanding in the widest sense. A deeper study of personal relations is obviously worthwhile but is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I now turn to the power relation which justifies a section on its own.

2.21 The power relation and empathy

When the other-than-self is another human being resistance may lead to conflict because the intentions of the two may differ. Accommodation always involves compromise in which both individuals gain something and lose something. The balance of gains and losses may or may not favour one of the two individuals but irrespective of the final outcome there is always the risk that in any particular encounter a power relation will emerge. One hypothesis worth exploring is that the power relation obtains when the perception of difference becomes transformed into a "perception" of division. Over time the self is able to discriminate between different other-than-selves and relate to each of them with greater and greater subtlety though there appears to be a limit. The degree of discriminability varies from one individual to another. Consideration of this limit (familiar to students of person perception) leads us to the question: how is the experience of the givenness of difference, an event in passive consciousness, related to the emergence of divisiveness, an action in active consciousness? Human action, the manifestation of intention, by its very nature is capable of converting perception of difference into "perception" of division. Division is the more or less deliberate categorisation of certain others according to whatever attribute has special significance for the discriminator in more or less well-defined circumstances. The act of recognising and accepting another in the spirit of non-manipulative openness results in the direct perception of the other as he or she actually is; that is, the other's givenness is grasped non-attributively. The perceiver does not pigeon-hole the other by means of a covert category system or schema. In the absence of this openness, however, classifying others is likely and is fairly typical. Within the empathic relation a person seeking to know and understand another will tend not to classify him or her although ordinary human frailty will occasionally take its toll. Divisiveness refers to the belief that differences provide the necessary and sufficient grounds for establishing and maintaining power relations between the entities perceived as different. Is it inevitable that perception of difference in the absence of the stance of non-manipulative openness should lead to

divisiveness? If so how does this come about? (In effect, how does the self come to equate difference with division?) Are all or any of these processes functions of action or do they have their origins elsewhere?

The perception of similarities and differences and their relationship to empathy are discussed in several places in this dissertation, e.g. 1.27, 1.426, 2.35. Differences are inevitable for genetic, environmental and developmental reasons. In themselves they are unremarkable, a feature of our existential world; they indicate no more than the diversity of human biographies in all their richness including the variety of limitations from one individual to another, which a healthy interdependence can substantially counteract in the ordinary everyday process of living.(16) I have tried to argue that healthy dependence on others in order to offset our own limitations is only possible within the empathic relation for only then are differences recognised for what they are, inspiring the members to engage in joint action in pursuit of a shared common ideal or goal (e.g. to support one another in their various inadequacies) non-manipulatively, non-judgementally, non-attributively.

If my argument is sound then the problem of accounting for divisive manoeuvres becomes one of explaining how people come to consider differences as sufficiently psychologically threatening to induce them to behave exploitatively. Some explanations are cultural. Competitive societies encourage the exploitation of others; differences create advantages or disadvantages according to point of view. In the struggle to survive those with essential skills or knowledge, money or influence or special know-how (including contacts and privileged information) have a head start over those who lack these qualities. Greed, envy and covetousness are also cultural artifacts which, though not perhaps peculiar to industrialised societies, are possibly more active among members of them and receive more nourishment there than in other kinds of social organisation. It appears to be more difficult to construe them as part of the human genetic endowment; socialisation offers a readier and more intelligible explanation. However, cultural determinism as an explanation would have to show how exploitation of differences becomes, and is sustained as,

the normal basis for entering into interpersonal relations. There is no shortage of theories: operant conditioning, psychoanalysis, social exchange theory.

The trouble with cultural determinism in its many forms is that it assumes an almost infinite degree of plasticity in the human being; people are regarded as essentially infinitely malleable. Explanations of this kind are virtually theories about human nature. One of the benefits of the newer phenomenological and hermeneutical psychologies is their analysis of the active agency of the persons in their day-to-day existences. Humans are not simple (or complex) reactive organisms but agents generating intentions, to whom existence is not only full of meaning but is wholly inexplicable without active recourse to searches for meaning as part of the business of living in the world. (This suggests one of the routes for clarifying the notion of subjectivity.(17)) From this point of view contingency-based explanations are inadequate. It is not enough to point to cultural determinants which move people to adopt divisive strategies. Explanations must also show what their adoption does for the divisive individual. How does exploitation of others (on the basis of perceived differences) come to have constructive or productive meaning for human agents? In short, how does divisiveness become part of the subjectivity of the human agent in his or her livingness in the world?

To pursue this question (and others like it) would take us too far afield but several points can be made. First, divisiveness is learned and not innate. Secondly, the learning of divisive strategies is better explained with the help of the notion of human subjectivity (in the phenomenological sense) than by contingency-based theories such as operant conditioning, or by appealing to general theories about the nature of humankind. Thirdly, fear and anxiety, which are in part innate, may be potent factors. Although a few experiences appear to be naturally fear-arousing, e.g. sudden loud noises, the falling sensation, the visual cliff, most are learned. However, fear and anxiety seem essential to biological survival and are generally held to underpin the flight or fight response to threats. Again humans behave differently from other animals who appear to know what to

do on the first occasion whereas humans do not. Nevertheless fear and anxiety appear to induce automatically a heightened state of readiness to act defensively in circumstances of threat or danger. Whether this on its own can or does lead to the adoption of divisive attitudes is a matter for further study but my own view is that it is no more than a predisposing factor. The critical one is the socialisation process which equips human beings not only with a ready-made repertoire of culturally acceptable actions in fear- or anxiety-arousing circumstances, but also defines what is fear- or anxiety-arousing.

The striving, contact, resistance sequence may lead to conflict because of the different purposes each individual will have. However, it does not follow that conflict must lead to division. As I have tried to show earlier, aggressive conflict does not necessarily follow disagreement or difference of purposes, etc. Both persons may accept their differences or disagreements as an irreducible fact of life. Even if conflict does arise further exploration may point to ways of accepting the divergence of views without resorting to demonstrations of ill-will of which the adoption of divisive strategies is one of the most insidious. Each actor can choose whether to accommodate the other and to what degree. Negotiation is always an option. Whether the opportunity to negotiate will be taken up will depend on the attitudes of the participants to each other, to their enterprises, and to themselves. Finally, the persons can always admit that a particular conflict of intentions is beyond resolution and accept that state of affairs. It is always a matter of choice. It is one of my major premisses that the presence or absence of an empathic relationship between the individuals is what determines the final path: recognition and acceptance of difference or enforcement of division.

One explanation of the failure to contain the effects of conflict possibly centres on the idea of value since all choices involve evaluation. The act of choosing rests on a sequence of steps (though this assertion itself rests on the assumption that all choices are considered, which is not to say rationally arrived at). First comes discrimination: this is an X (and not a Y). It is a skill and, as

with any skill, is a function of informed practice. We need to know what attributes or properties are important and how to recognise them when they are present. Non-instances are as important as instances during the acquisition process. Next comes judgement: X is good/bad for you because...It is a function of knowledge in action and involves the perception of relations as well as facts and properties. Evaluation means putting a value on something: X is better than Y; Z is worth so much. It implies discrimination and judgement and a set of values which are dimensional and hierarchically arranged. Preference includes all the above but in addition introduces the idea of satisfaction. That is preferred which to the preferrer seems most satisfactory at the time. It may not coincide with that which is most highly valued. Finally choice is an action whereas all the others are mental events. The sequence looks like this:

discrimination → judgement → evaluation → preference → choice (=action)

We do not necessarily choose that which we prefer nor that which we value most highly. Action has to adapt to the exigencies of the real world in which the choice is made. It is often argued that choice will focus on what the agent feels is the best, most appropriate, action in the circumstances.

We know that feelings are stimulated by, and hence become attached to, choices (and to the other steps in the value chain). In this way intentions, the mental substrate of action and therefore like action an outcome of the choice process, acquire differential value in the schemata of life-chances (a compound of past intentions, actions, and their experiential outcomes for the agent) which an individual accumulates through his or her evolving experience. This accumulated experience amounts to a personal history of active consciousness which will include memories of earlier gains and losses, balances and imbalances. This, it seems to me, is how we might understand the notion of subjectivity. Thus a personal biography is not a passive affair; a repository so to speak of past events, their outcomes, and their attached feelings. It is an active process; the quality of the effort impelling action is an expression of the individual's livingness which is coloured by his or her unique outlook or disposition, itself a function, in part, of past experience. The underlying psy-

chological and physiological elements will vary from one individual to another even if the object of experience (the focus of conflict) and the context of resistance are the same. It is easy to see that individual differences are likely to be found in all the elements constituting an act of choice. However, it is hypothesised that differences in the perceptions of value will tend to be the critical ones in determining the outcome (and the conduct) of conflict.

The having mode of existence so typical of acquisitive societies is an obvious candidate for one of the formative influences in the evolution of the power relation for the having mode may predispose individuals to adopt divisive strategies. The relationship between preference for the having mode of existence, the adoption of divisive strategies and the power relation needs further study.

2.22 Summary of the analysis of personal relations

I suggest that personal relations may be classified in two different ways. The first crude distinction is that between interpersonal and non-human relations. The finer and more interesting classification sorts them into seven independent and mutually exclusive categories:

- (a) empathic
- (b) quasi-empathic
- (c) impersonal
- (d) power
- (e) formal
- (f) informal
- (g) fortuitous

By independent I mean that if a self, for whatever reason, is involved with an other-than-self and is therefore relating to the other in one of these ways, there is nothing in the nature of the relation which will, of itself, cause a shift to one of the other six nor, should such a transition occur, is there any property of the first relation, of itself, which will determine the change which actually takes place. In other words the nature of the relation and the causes of a shift from one relation to another are to be found in the intentions and interests of the members of the relation and not in the nature of the relation itself.

By mutually exclusive I mean that it is not possible for the members simultaneously to enter into two different relations with each other. Here we need to be careful about whose point of view we are considering. As we have seen it frequently happens that an empathising person (one who is trying to establish an empathic relation with another) strives to get to know and understand a hostile individual, one who might well adopt, or try to adopt, a power relation with the other. The two members, for a time at least, are in different relations; but neither participant can empathise with the other and at the same time maintain a power relation with him or her. In other words each type of relation has its own set of essential characteristics which uniquely distinguishes it from the others and which is antagonistic to, or at least out of kilter with, the characteristics of the other relations.

To illustrate these observations consider a formal relation: manager-subordinate, leader-follower. Weber's study of leadership, often (mistakenly in my view) taken over lock, stock and barrel by management theorists, outlined some of the properties of the leader-follower relation. In Weber's analysis two distinctly different relations appear to be confused: a dominance relationship in which one member is superior to the other in certain important and stated ways, and one of the other types of relation. Which other type depends on the category of leader Weber is considering. For example, the traditional leader is the purest instance of a formal relation. The dominance relation is what it is because it has always been so and the methods of choosing leaders in "traditional" societies (or sub-cultures) are likewise buried in ancient history. No other type of relation is or need be involved. The charismatic type of leader, in contrast, depends perhaps on an empathic or a quasi-empathic relation from the follower's point of view and perhaps on a power relation from the charismatic leader's perspective. In this case the particular formal type of relation (dominance in this example) is replaced by two other relations: the empathic or quasi-empathic and the power relations. In the legal-rational type of leadership the formal relation is replaced by the impersonal and is the purest example of this type. Perhaps for this reason management theorists

and practising managers have been eager to adopt it because it represents in their view the stance of the ideal manager. There is nothing in the nature of a formal relation (here represented by dominance) to suggest that a transition to, say, an empathic or quasi-empathic or a power or an impersonal relation is necessary or inevitable. Only the intentions, motives, interests of the members of the relation determine the nature of the actual relation (as seen from each participant's point of view) which exists between them. The sorry plight of industrial relations may be substantially due to the consequences of the participants adopting a type of relation more suited to their own (conflicting) motives than to the situation precipitating their confrontation. Similar arguments apply to legal or ritual relations which are other variants of the formal type. Neither has to become impersonal, for example, but frequently they are made so; adoption of a particular formal relation can thus become a convenient defensive manoeuvre behind which to hide or from which to manipulate events; in the latter case the choice is for the power relation.

Individuals may alter the basis of their relations with others at will in the ways described above. Moreover, as the analysis in these first two chapters suggests, individuals may change their ground within a relation according to their chosen form of knowing or their approach to the other (human being) as biological mechanism, organism, psychophysical individual or person (and analogously for non-human others). The proposed classification system of personal relations seems to offer a new and dynamic approach to a theory of social relations which attempts to match closely their complexity as actually experienced in the real world. In addition it offers a basis for designing training programmes in social skills that are not conceived in manipulative terms or from the point of view of the expert helper in the manner, for example, of Carkhuff and his colleagues.

2.3 FORMS OF EMOTIONAL BOND

Empathy is an emotional bond in which at least one person approaches another in a spirit of openness, goodwill and respect (one of the

elements of love) and deliberately identifies at some stage with the other in order to discover the limits of their unique personal identities (personhoods) to the enhancement of both. In mutual empathy (the ideal relation) mutual (non-sexual) love blossoms and prospers further encouraging the empathic relation and its associated openness and goodwill. There are other kinds of emotional tie and it might be instructive to examine some of these in order to see how they differ from empathy and also to deepen still further our grasp of the nature of the empathic relation.

Every kind of emotional bond which one individual forges with another poses the question: what is the purpose of this tie? We need to know not only what it does for the initiator but also what he or she thinks it does for the other (if indeed such a question even crosses the initiator's mind). In the context of this dissertation another question presents itself: what determines the choice of the particular bond being forged? Why sympathy rather than empathy? Or emotional identification rather than altruism? Or love rather than any other? We need to know how these various ways of forming emotional bonds with others differ and how they relate to one another. One approach to these tasks is to try and establish the essential characteristics and possibly the sufficient and necessary conditions for fostering and sustaining each of them. In this way a comparative study of the different types of emotional bond may help answer the questions posed above (and incidentally confirm that they are valid types of questions to ask).

In approaching this task I do not claim any merit for my particular selection; as with personal relations I know of no systematic analysis of emotional bonds though Scheler's study of sympathy offers some useful pointers. In addition to empathy, already studied in Chapter 1, I shall here consider the following kinds:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| (a) sympathy | (b) community of feeling |
| (c) emotional contagion | (d) emotional identification |
| (e) (Freudian) identification
(and object cathexis) | (f) attraction (and repulsion) |
| (g) love (and hate) | (h) altruism |
| (i) friendship | |

2.31 Sympathy

All the emotional ties in the above list are examples of fellow-feeling, "an overworked and consequently ambiguous term" as Mercer says.(18) Scheler's *The Nature of Sympathy* clarifies the concept considerably; he distinguishes four main types, (a) through (d) on my list above, all of which I shall be examining in this and the next three sections. We might have added empathy if Scheler had not rejected his (mistaken) understanding of this fellow-feeling.

According to Scheler sympathy centres on two phenomenologically different facts: the experience of the sympathiser (A) who rejoices or commiserates with the other (B), and the feelings of joy or grief experienced by B. In order that A may "participate" in B's feelings he or she must have understood or vicariously visualised them. These feelings will have been occasioned by an event but it is not necessary that A know what caused (i.e. precipitated) B's present state in order to grasp the givenness of B's feelings. In no sense are we to imagine that B's joy or grief somehow filters across to A who now experiences B's feelings in "sympathy"; "...in true unalloyed commiseration and rejoicing there is no state of sorrow or joy in one-self."(19) Phenomenologically the two sets of feelings are different and distinct; "...the two functions of *vicariously visualised feeling*, and *participation in feeling* are separately given and must be sharply distinguished."(20)

It was because Lipps, in his projective theory of empathy, confused these two that Scheler rejected such accounts. Lipps actually introduced three confusing ideas: imitation, emotional reproduction and projection. The spectator watching an acrobat internally imitates the performer's movements and so reproduces feelings which he or she has formerly experienced and which the spectator now projects on to the performer. Imitation obviously presupposes the givenness of the phenomena it is invoked to explain and so adds nothing to the explanation. The spectator's (reproduced) feelings have no obvious connection with those of the performer thus leaving the status of the latter obscure in Lipps' theory. In any event they are now lost since they are distorted by the spectator's own (projected) feelings.

In Scheler's theory of sympathy the other's feelings are directly given in the other's expressiveness. All things, animate and inanimate, express their nature in their own beingness. For Scheler expressive phenomena are given to us as

a sort of primary "perception". It is in the blush that we perceive shame, in the laughter, joy...the same sense-data which go to make up the body for outward perception, can also construe, for the act of insight, the expressive phenomena which then appear, so to speak, as the "outcome" of experiences within.(21)

The symbolic relation between the other's expressiveness and a self's experience derived from this "same sense-data" has

a *fundamental* basis of connection, which is independent of our specifically human gestures of expression...a *universal grammar*, valid for all languages of expression.(22)

Such a proposition is consistent with, and for Scheler a necessary consequence of, an organic conception of the world in which "all natural phenomena appear both as the undivided total life of a single world-organism and the universal fluid matrix in which it is expressed."(23) He quotes approvingly Rodin's remark: "A thing is simply the shape and outline of the "flame" which gives it birth." Thus to sympathise with another is *inter alia* to experience the other's givenness, that is, the other's expressiveness, and to become aware of the other's beingness, the "flame" which makes him, her or it, what each is and no other. Moreover, for Scheler the organic world view is a necessary precursor in contrast to a mechanistic conception of the world which he associates with the post-Descartes era, the age of the new humanism. In relation to the theory of empathy presented here my distinction between having and being modes of existence roughly corresponds to Scheler's organic and mechanistic conceptions of the world especially as to their outcomes. Scheler's is the more erudite and encyclopaedic account yet he fails to stress clearly enough for me the important contrast between having and being which I feel is essential to the study of any type of fellow-feeling.

Several other points about Scheler's view of sympathy need to be made. First,

...any kind of rejoicing or pity *presupposes*...some sort of knowledge of the fact...of experience in other people, just as the possibility of such knowledge presupposes, as its condition, the existence of other conscious beings.(24)

I shall not concern myself with the problem of establishing the existence of other minds but we may agree that sympathy makes little sense unless we also imagine that conscious and sentient beings are its objects. Secondly, sympathy is intensional; that is, it is implicit in the idea of sympathy that we feel for someone about something, e.g. A is glad for B about B's joy, commiserates with C about C's grief. Thirdly, sympathy involves knowledge, not necessarily analytical, intellectual knowledge; the sympathiser understands the other by grasping spontaneously and directly the other's expressiveness (which Scheler seems to equate with undifferentiated identification):

The epistemological conclusion of this book will show us how, to be aware of any organism as alive, to distinguish even the simplest animate movement from an inanimate one, a minimum of undifferentiated identification is necessary; we shall see how the simplest vicarious emotion, the most elementary fellow-feeling, and over and above these the capacity for understanding between minds, are built up on the basis of this primitive givenness of "the other".(25)

This process is unconscious and occurs

...only when two spheres of man's consciousness which are by nature always present concurrently in him, are almost or wholly empty of particular content: the cognitive, spiritual and rational sphere (which is personal in form), and the sphere of physical and corporeal sensation and sensory feeling. Only in as much and insofar as the acts and functions operative in these spheres are put out of action, does man become disposed to identification and capable of achieving it.(26)

We must return to Scheler's notion of emotional unity (identification) in the appropriate section but the passage reproduced above brings to mind Krishnamurti's "quiet mind" and might find a kinship with the spirit of openness and the experience of the givenness of the world in passive consciousness which feature in my own theory of empathy.

A fourth point focusses on the detachment inherent in sympathy. "For sympathy presupposes just that awareness of distance between selves ..."(27) The sympathiser is always aware of his or her separateness from the other. According to Scheler in all other forms of fellow-feeling, including what he takes to be empathy, this separateness is lost. What is interesting in Scheler's account is his precondition

for sympathy: undifferentiated identification. This is characterised by a kind of fusion of the self with the other. How does a self move from a feeling of unity with the other in identification to the sense of detachment characteristic of sympathy? We must try to answer this question in the proper place.

Fifthly, sympathy is innate.

Given the range of emotional qualities of which man is capable, and from which alone his own actual feelings are built up, he has an *equally innate* capacity for comprehending the feelings of others, even though he may never on any occasion have encountered such feelings (or their ingredients) in himself, as real unitary experiences. (28)

Scheler is careful to point out that sensory feelings have to be experienced in order that we may understand them in others but at the higher levels of vital, mental, and spiritual feelings this is not necessary. Scheler acknowledges wide variations in the exercise of sympathy attributable to racial, group and individual differences but he asserts that heredity plays a part the specific details of which are as yet unknown. He dismisses notions such as social instinct (aiming his criticisms primarily at Darwin and Spenser). These and other writers, he feels, confuse social instinct with emotional infection, or with sexual instinct. In any event they have misunderstood the relationship between fellow-feeling and sociality. Assimilating the experience of the livingness of others is not:

...a consequence, but a *presupposition*, of the possibility of any kind of sociality; for this as such must always be more than a mere spiritual proximity and purely causal efficacy of things upon each other. There is no such thing as a "society" of stones. Things are only "social" when they are in some sense present "for one another". (29)

Thus for Scheler sympathy, a "positive unalloyed fellow-feeling, which is a genuine out-reaching and entry into the person and his individual situation, a true and authentic transcendence of one's self" (30), is preceded by undifferentiated identification that "is not only the separate process of feeling in another that is unconsciously taken as one's own, but his self (in all its basic attitudes) that is identified with one's own self" (31), and is an emotional bond in which the self experiences the "primitive givenness of "the other" ". This, incidentally, is not to be confused with specialised identification which I shall discuss in the section devoted to iden-

tification. It is this capacity for undifferentiated identification that is innate. Moreover it is the capacity to "read" the other's expressiveness that we are really talking about since it is through expressiveness that the beingness of phenomena become manifest. This is as true of the inanimate as the animate:

Identification can extend to the cosmos only if the Ideas and Forms of Intuition which have pure and immediate application to the organic element in experience, are superimposed also on dead matter, its changes and motions, doings and undoings, its coming-to-be and passing-away. Only then do all natural phenomena appear both as the undivided total life of a single world-organism and the universal fluid matrix in which it is expressed...Once the expressed meaning is made out, the conative-affective self makes the immediate, non-inferential leap into the living heart of things, taking in their form and pattern and realizing that their perceptible attributes (colours, sounds, scents, tastes and so forth) are only the outward aspect and frontier of the inner life thus imparted.(32)

Scheler appears to restrict the non-living to natural forms but I cannot see why human artifacts should be excluded.

As we saw in an earlier excerpt(33) the activation of the innate tendency towards fellow-feeling is much easier in a society (or group or individual) that supports an organic conception of the world. It certainly requires a quiescent observer, one freed from mental and physical preoccupations which, of course, is not to say inactive or inattentive.

The necessary and sufficient conditions that underpin A's sympathy for B thus appear to be:

- (1) that A and B are conscious and sentient beings;
- (2) that A vicariously reproduces B's feelings and understands them (or believes so); that is to say
 - (a) A unconsciously identifies with B; and
 - (b) A experiences the givenness of B.
- (3) A is conscious throughout of his or her separateness from B; i.e. A "participates" in B's feelings without confusing his or her own feelings with those of B.

In a recent study of sympathy Mercer introduces a number of ideas which seem to me either unnecessarily restrictive or irrelevant.(34) For example, he feels that sympathy essentially refers to another's suffering but not to pleasant feelings. This may be a matter of social custom but I do not see how pleasant feelings can be excluded from sympathy as a concept. On etymological grounds there is no basis for such a discrimination; and Scheler convinces us that neither is it justified on phenomenological grounds in relation to

sympathy itself. Secondly, Mercer feels that fellow-feeling must elicit an altruistic concern for the other in order to count as sympathy. If action is a consequence of fellow-feeling then I agree that it might ideally take the form of altruistic concern for the other; otherwise the sympathiser might intervene in the life of another unhelpfully or by imposition or, worse still, in order to exploit the other for his or her own ends. However, I do not think sympathy should be confused with its consequences and therefore I do not accept that the latter should form part of the set of conditions which must be fulfilled to claim that A sympathises with B. On the other hand a theory of sympathy which does assert a necessary altruistic outcome must also show how this altruism necessarily follows from this particular fellow-feeling. Scheler himself shows that sympathy can lead to the kind of "charitable" action which leaves the recipient (the object of the donor's sympathy) resentful, humiliated and even more rejected than before experiencing the sympathiser's "good" work. Such an outcome does not accord with the usual meaning of altruism yet the sympathy and the "gift" may be, from the donor's point of view, genuine expressions of the sympathiser's feelings.

The difference between empathy and sympathy can be expressed most simply by saying that sympathy may be an element of the empathic relation; or it may represent an empathic relation which has not reached fulfilment but has not degenerated into a lesser relation (a power relation, for example). Sympathy is essentially one way; mutual sympathy is possible but the qualities necessary for such a condition are those which could lead to mutual empathy and I can think of few reasons why two people would choose to sympathise with one another rather than empathise. They might, of course, drift into mutual sympathy because they are ignorant of the more satisfying alternative.

The sympathiser does not move towards the stage of deliberate identification with the other; nor do they explore similarities and differences between them. Sympathy lacks that urge to self- and other-enhancement which is characteristic of empathy despite the attitude of openness, the spontaneous reaching out to the other and the experience of the other's givenness all of which are common to both

sympathy and empathy. What appears to be lacking from sympathy is a positive move towards the other. We do not go out of our way to sympathise with someone. If the circumstances are right we may act sympathetically towards another but we do not enter into a sympathetic relation as we do into an empathic one. Indeed such an idea is odious for it suggests a subtle contempt for the other. Genuine sympathy cannot be contrived; it can only be a fortuitous reaction to another's happiness or suffering. Once we actively engage in a relation with the other, provided we do so non-manipulatively, we must, it seems to me, enter into an empathic relation (or in certain conditions, a quasi-empathic one). Empathy may blossom from the experience we label sympathy though in most cases this is unlikely since sympathy occurs most commonly in passing encounters with others or even with those whom we have not met but have heard about. This is another major difference between the two; empathy is a relation between a person and another human being both of whom are physically present to and for one another. Sympathy is possible for an absent other; every charitable organisation depends on it. In fact we are now probably talking about pity for a generalised other.

Notwithstanding the obvious differences from empathy, sympathy, as Scheler construes it, is sufficiently similar in some important respects to accord it membership of the same family of interpersonal emotional bonds as empathy.

2.32 Community of feeling

This is Scheler's term (*Miteinanderfuehlen*) for that situation in which two or more people together feel the same joy or sorrow because "they feel and experience in common, not only the self-same value-situation, but also the same keenness of emotion in regard to it." (35) To use Scheler's own illustration the sorrow of each parent at the loss of their child (the value-content) and the grief each experiences (the functional relation thereto) "are here one and identical." This sharing of feeling through the similarity of each partner's inner and intimate grasp of the situation is quite distinct from sympathy as described above. Sympathy does not require that the participants shall share their personal biographies let

alone have that inner access to them so typical of married couples and long-standing friendships.

Another explanation is possible, however. Each parent is nursing his or her own sorrow and giving vent to private grief. Assuming that at least one of them is well-disposed towards the other and maintains an attitude of openness then that parent may enter into an empathic relation with the other, grasping the other's givenness, recognising similarities and differences and moving towards the exploration of them with the other. They are well placed to carry out this mutual sharing through deliberate identification and to join in a common action to seek and achieve a shared common goal: for example, to learn to bear their grief or perhaps to devote their lives to the alleviation of whatever caused the death of their child. In short their awareness of the unity and separateness of their individual identities heightened through their shared grief could provide the occasion for a much more profound emotional bond than either sympathy or community of feeling. Empathy need not follow from the situation Scheler describes but if it does the community of feeling might, if it occurs, become one step in the process of mutual empathy. This seems to me to be a natural consequence of the common plight of these parents if the essential preconditions are present. Edith Stein argues along similar lines in her discussion of the relationship between empathy and the feeling of oneness with the other. (36)

2.33 Emotional infection

In a sense this is not a category of fellow-feeling at all since what we observe is a parody, a mere surface appearance of fellow-feeling. What happens is that a state of feeling in A somehow passes over to B who then behaves as though he or she had genuinely experienced the feeling. A's gaiety infects B who now becomes gay in turn but without knowing the source of A's jollity or realising that B's "happy" feelings are not his or her own and that their source lies in A. Children or adults can become infected with fits of the giggles because one of them is seized with uncontrollable laughter. This triggers a chain reaction in which the others spontaneously

burst into laughter "in sympathy". Other obvious examples are crowd behaviour among humans (e.g. lynch mobs, football vandalism, motorway madness) and herd behaviour among animals.

Spontaneous displays of grief at funerals by people not directly concerned with the deceased, particularly where the dead person was a loved public figure, is another good example of emotional infection. So too are the often perplexing signs of euphoria at political gatherings and party conferences often in circumstances in which one would least expect it: after much bickering and rancour among members during the debating sessions, for example. It is a moot question whether some leader-follower relations are not better explained by the mechanism of emotional infection than that of emotional identification. The guru-disciple relation in its many forms seems especially prone to this phenomenon. Disciples can be controlled not so much by the persona of the guru as by their own self-destructive tendencies which lead them to abandon themselves to the emotional bath which each member enjoys with others without recognising the source of his or her emotional surrender. The staging of the Nazi parades in the '30s, of May Day parades in Moscow and other communist countries, all kinds of marches and mass gatherings, offer further examples of how this human tendency to wallow in highly charged fantasy is exploited. Fanatical sects and obsessional movements (e.g. nationalisms, fundamentalist revivals) also seem to rely far more on emotional infection than on ideological purity or tendencies for members to identify with either leaders or causes, for coalescing the emotional energies of the masses.

Scheler accounts for tradition in terms of emotional infection.

In tradition...I believe that "A is B" because the other person does so, but without knowing that he does so; I simply share his opinions without distinguishing the act of understanding the sense of his belief from my own act of opining. Thus I may feel resentment, anger or love for a thing, or a cause, because those about me do so, or because my forbears did. But I take the emotions in question to be my emotions, engendered by the nature of the case (e.g. the cause itself), and have no suspicion of their origin. (37)

Scheler attributes the great power of tradition to this conviction each of us has that such "acquired" emotions are genuinely our own and arrived at solely through consideration of the material (the cause, ideology, object of hate) to which they refer.

A final example is found in the way in which a setting may affect our mood. The "atmosphere" of a scene or location can and does affect people though some appear to be more vulnerable (or sensitive) to the "mood of place" than others. This phenomenon is also explicable in terms of quasi-empathy as I have suggested elsewhere.

What are the characteristics of emotional infection? First it is unconscious. One is swept along on an emotional tide; one is possessed by its intensity. There is no conscious awareness of being infected; we just become gay, fearful, panic-stricken, violent or whatever the prevailing emotion determines but it is our own gaiety, fear, panic and so forth, that we experience. Moreover, we do not know why we feel as we do. There is no definable cause, though often this is manufactured on the spot. This is demonstrated in the well-known phenomenon of scape-goating. The apparent "cause" (the object of the prejudice) offers a substitute for the real one which is unknown to us and often unknowable, beyond our reach.

Secondly, it is spontaneous. It is not a function of deliberate intention. It is an event which takes over some part of our conscious life. This is a third characteristic: it is beyond our conscious control. Once possessed, only exhaustion or some act of completion (e.g. the actual lynching) can bring the infection to an end. One of the causes of loss of self-control is the self-generating character of emotional infection through a positive feedback process.

The emotion caused by infection reproduces itself again by means of expression and imitation, so that the infectious emotion increases, again reproduces itself, and so on...it is above all this reciprocal effect of a self-generating infection which leads to the uprush of a common surge of emotion, and the characteristic feature of a crowd in action, that is so easily carried beyond the intentions of every one of its members, and does things for which no one acknowledges either the will or the responsibility. (38)

Emotional infection is clearly a most potent emotional bond but a relatively short-lived one. Hence organised religions, political parties, particularly the fundamentalist types of either, need to recharge the emotional batteries of their followers at frequent intervals with careful attention to the awe-inspiring paraphernalia of mass "hypnotism".

Emotional infection has little in common with sympathy and even less with empathy. In fact its right to be included in any discussion of fellow-feeling rests solely on its superficial resemblance to fellow-feeling and the fact, as Scheler points out, that many distinguished thinkers have confused the two, Spencer, Darwin and Nietzsche among them.

2.34 Emotional identification

Scheler equates identification with a "true sense of emotional unity" and is thus a limiting case of emotional infection.

It represents a limit in that here it is not only the separate process of feeling in another that is unconsciously taken as one's own, but his self (in all its basic attitudes), that is identified with one's own self.(39)

This is an involuntary and unconscious process and may take two forms. In the idiopathic type a self identifies "through the total eclipse and absorption of another self by one's own", a form of psychological murder. In the heteropathic type a self's "formal status as a subject is usurped by the other's personality, with all its characteristic aspects"; the self is totally overwhelmed by, surrenders to, the other in a kind of submission, even to the point of psychological suicide.

Scheler gives as examples the identification among some primitive tribes of individual members of a totem with individual members of the totem species (e.g. red parrots in the case of the Eoroso tribe); identification of tribe members with their ancestors (not the same as ancestor worship); mass-identification with the leader; the ecstatic identification of the votaries in the religious rites of antiquity in which they "become" gods or goddesses; the relation between the hypnotist and his subject (which differs from the foregoing in that under hypnosis the subject takes on the character of the hypnotist whereas in the previous examples the identifier takes on the existence of the other). Other examples include children's make-believe, e.g. the little girl playing "mother" to her dolls; the "mutual coalescence" of truly loving sexual intercourse when the partners "in an impassioned suspension of their spiritual personality (itself the seat of individual awareness), seem to relapse into a single life-stream in which nothing of individual selves remains

any longer distinct..."(40); the similar phenomenon in the unorganised group in which under the leader ("the despotic idiopath") the individual members gradually merge "into a single stream of instinct and feeling, whose pulse thereafter governs the behaviour of all its members, so that ideas and schemes are driven before it..."(41); the mother-child relationship; "sympathetic" behaviour among many species of animals exemplified by Scheler in the relationship between the ammophila (a species of wasp) and its living food store (a paralysed caterpillar) on which it lays its eggs. Most of these illustrate the heteropathic type of identification. Mutual coalescence is neither one nor the other type. The wasp-caterpillar relationship allows Scheler to explore the instinctual character of identification.

As with infection so with identification there can be no genuine fellow-feeling since the self is unable to distinguish between his or her own self and that of the other. The other and the self are totally merged into a single reality: the experiencing self. Since Scheler claims that fellow-feeling grows out of identification we have the problem of showing how a self becomes conscious of separateness from the other which, he asserts, is a necessary precondition for genuine sympathy. This we shall return to in a moment.

The instinctive character of identification he elaborates in a variety of ways. According to Scheler young children, primitives and subjects under hypnosis show similar psychological characteristics:

...the faulty differentiation of perception and imagery; the ecstatic habit of surrendering in passively riveted attention to whatever is presented; the increasingly affective and instinctive properties of the content experienced...; the liability to faulty discrimination between "I" and "Thou", and the concurrent tendency to identify with the other self.(42)

Although he shows that hypnosis has psychological features unique to itself the similarity between these three groups impressed him sufficiently to argue that undifferentiated identification is instinctive and operates on the "vital centre of consciousness", that half-way point between the spiritual and sensory levels of being. I take this to be Scheler's attempt to deal with the elusive "I" at the centre of this experience of emotional unity. In his conception of humankind there are four levels of being each representing a level

in his value schema and a location for the experiencing "I" which is the focus of consciousness at each level of being. The location of the "vital centre of consciousness" is

...that climatic region of the soul to which belong the energies of life and death, the passions, emotions, drives and instincts; (these are of three types: the instinctive appetites of hunger and thirst, the erotic life-instincts and their derivatives, and the instinctive desire for power, dominance, increase and reputation.) It is impulses such as these which may lead, in their conscious manifestations, to the sense of unity and identification proper.(43)

The similarity with Freud's notion of the Id is striking. Scheler offers few clues as to how these impulses lead to "identification proper", which is "...automatic, never a matter of choice or of mechanical association..." and which requires that the personal and physical levels of being "are almost or wholly empty of content". He compares perception and instinctive behaviour:

Parallel to this (i.e. the holistic character of perception) we find the same simple and unitary vital principle displaying itself in a range of *instinctive impulses*, built hierarchically one upon another, and becoming ever more specific with every change in the structure and circumstances of the organism. These impulses are simply the more or less conscious correlates of what are, objectively speaking, *the constituent acts of its vital activity as a whole*...Wherever we have to postulate a more-than-reflex reaction in an organism, this is never intelligible as a direct outcome of the sum-total of individual chemical and physical stimuli impinging on the bodily structure; it is intelligible only in terms of the individual object as an *integral whole*; this being itself understood only as part of a unitary situation within a total environment presenting, for each kind of organism, a *typical structure* determined in advance of any perceptual or sensory acquaintance with it.(44)

In this passage Scheler not only further elaborates the instinctive character of identification and its location in his conceptualisation of a living entity; he also points to another distinction, that between undifferentiated and specialized identification. The latter refers to the self's responsiveness to the character of a specific situation which includes the self and the other, in their unique beingness in that situation, the integral whole within a typical structure as Scheler puts it. Specialized identification is built up out of undifferentiated identification; the accumulated experiences of the "primitive givenness of "the other" " provide the basis not only for fellow-feeling but also for "the capacity for a specialized identification with the particular dynamic of another creature's lifestream".

Humankind, says Scheler, has very largely lost this capacity due to the greater power of intellect, the burgeoning of rationalism and the growth of civilisation. He laments this atrophy though recognising the value of progress.

Only by *identification* at the organic level, and only by learning, on the intellectual plane, to understand the form and pattern of other ways of life, can we hope for a gradual *smoothing out* of the private idiosyncracies and limitations besetting each of us like a horse in blinkers.(45)

Both the intuitive primitive identification process and intellectual activity appear to be necessary for understanding "other ways of life". How are the two related and how does the awareness of the separateness of selves arise that is so essential for genuine sympathy? The answer, says Scheler, is to be found in

...the only place where identifications can take place...midway between bodily consciousness, which embraces in its own specific fashion all organic sensations and localized feeling, and that intellectual-cum-spiritual personality which is the centre of activity for all the "higher" acts of intention. For it seems to me certain that neither the spiritual nucleus of our personality and its correlates, nor our body and the phenomena (such as organic sensations and sensory feelings), whereby we apprehend the modification or restriction of its field, are such as to allow of the identification or sense of unity involved in each of the cases (of identification) cited. A man's *bodily consciousness*, like the individual essence of his *personality*, is *his and his alone*.(46)

Thus our sense of individual identity lies between the sensory and the mental-spiritual fields. Identification (sense of emotional unity) can only occur when these two levels of experience are quiescent as we have already seen.(33) Moreover, if identification is a necessary condition for sympathy, it is certainly not sufficient. Our sense of self is ours alone providing the ground for developing our sense of separateness from others.

We can appreciate the extent to which Scheler's account of identification differs from Freud's; in addition we can see how it underlies genuine sympathy (and empathy too but not as Scheler understood it). In both emotional bonds an understanding of another's feelings requires that we enter into the beingness of the other and experience his or her primitive givenness. According to Scheler this we can do only through the identification process (compounded out of a history of undifferentiated identifications and the capacity for specialized identification) in which we come to "read" intuitively, directly,

the other's expressiveness. But we need also to be aware of our separateness from the other.

Some further difficulties need to be dealt with. First, how in relation to a specific act of sympathy (or empathy in my case) is the identification process initiated? (According to Scheler this is spontaneous and unconscious; it cannot be contrived or actively sought. In my terms it is an event which just happens.) Secondly, how is the "sympathiser" (or empathiser) made aware of the givenness of his own feelings within the specific situation precipitating the act of sympathy (or empathy)? Thirdly, what is the precise nature of the relation between any specific act of sympathy (or empathy) and (a) the sensory and mental-spiritual levels of being (where an individual is conscious of his or her unique beingness); and (b) the organic level.

Scheler's answer to the first question is simply to appeal to the existence of an instinct for identification (which, he says, in civilized man has virtually disappeared). Identification proper is

...due to a specific "vital causality", different in kind both from rational purposiveness and from (formal) mechanical efficacy. Among other essential features of this basic causal relation we may notice its automatic, vectorial and goal-seeking (not purposive) character; it is a concrete causality *a tergo* of the past as a whole (as distinct from immediately antecedent causes of the uniformly recurrent, qualitatively identical type). (47)

If identification is not a matter of deliberate choice neither is it a function of simple association along S-R lines. It has direction and a functional end but has no specific implicit or explicit intention. It has its roots in the accumulated experiences of an individual (that amounts to his or her or its personal history).

Nevertheless a person can prepare for identification by elevating "himself" "heroically" above the body and all its concerns, while becoming at the same time "forgetful", or at least unmindful, of his spiritual individuality". (48) Apart from the questionable status of instinct and vital causality Scheler does not tell us how we set about these tasks nor does he enlarge on what actually happens. My answer for empathy is to rely on the idea of the stance of openness which anyone can cultivate and which is a natural property of some

primitive people, small children, women with young children and some neurotics, as Scheler says of the instinct for identification. Neuroses might, in my view, be a consequence of a predisposition to be especially sensitive to the beingness of the real world; heightened perception might engender anxiety, or in extreme cases, terror.

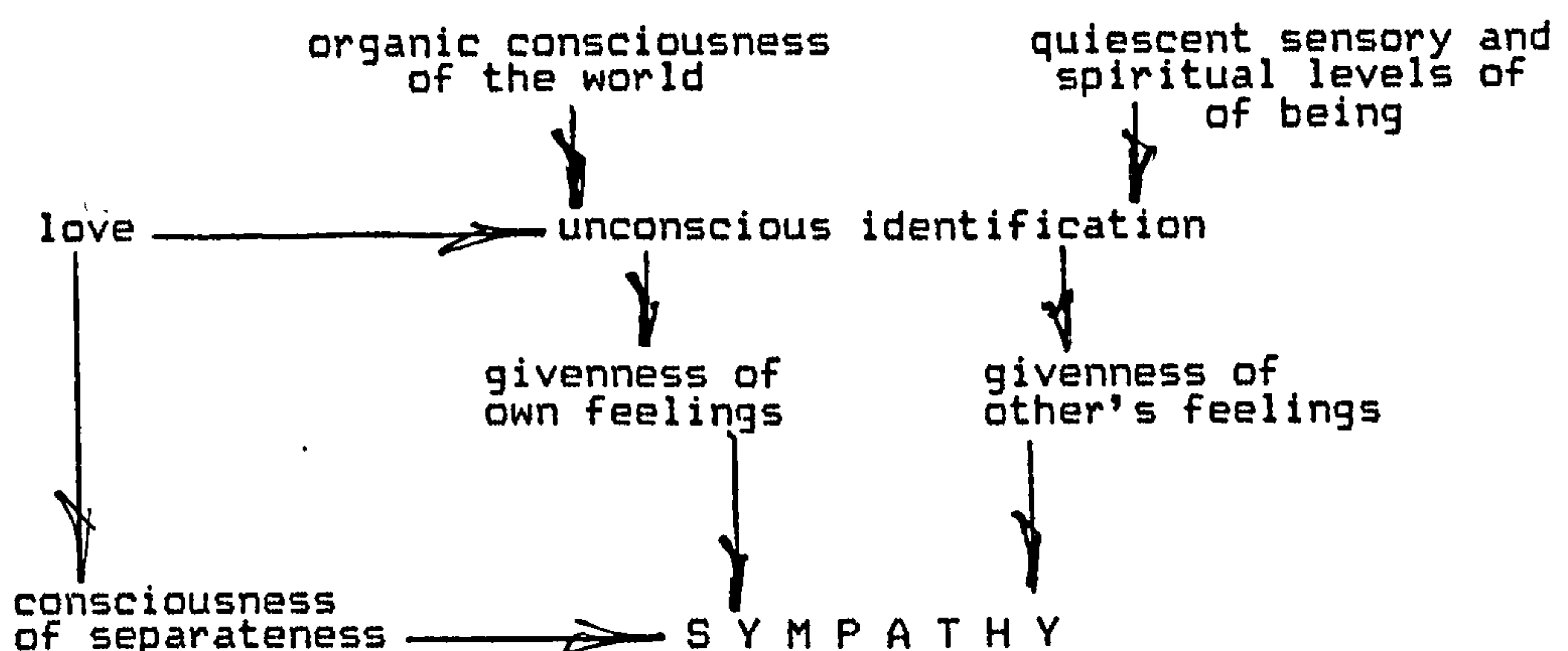
Scheler has a similar notion to openness as we have already seen: the necessary emptiness of "the cognitive, spiritual and rational sphere...and the sphere of physical and corporeal sensation and sensory feeling".(49) He also suggests that love is a necessary condition. "Fellow-feeling depends entirely on the nature and depth of love involved".(50) We shall examine the phenomenon of love in a later section but here we can recall that fellow-feeling depends on identification and note that

Love calls explicitly for an understanding entry into the individuality of *another* person *distinct in character* from the entering self, by him accepted as such and coupled indeed with a warm and whole-hearted endorsement of "his" reality as an individual, and "his" being what he is.(51)

Scheler's "love" combines much of what I mean by the stance of openness, the non-manipulative attitude and goodwill. Its essence is the "giving and receiving of freedom, independence and individuality". It is therefore in love that we identify with the other and

...in love, as it gradually re-emerges from the state of identification, there is built up, within the phenomenon itself, a clean-cut consciousness of two *distinct* persons.(52)

We thus have the following process at work in sympathy:



Before looking at the second question we must remind ourselves that it does not follow from his or her particular act of identification that a person will be moved to sympathise with the other (any more than an empathic relation will necessarily develop out of the self's attempt to enter into one). Scheler himself points out that there are different levels of sympathy depending on the depth of love preceding it. Where no love for the particular individual exists, say for a superior by a subordinate, "sympathy" for the former on the occasion of his or her forthcoming marriage will often take the form of a conventional gesture, if the subordinate does anything at all. Or pity for someone who has hit hard times may take the form of condescension, a chilling demonstration of the "sympathiser's" superiority and (contemptuous) generosity. In either case some form of identification is necessary in order for the "sympathiser" to be able to grasp the other's situation as one calling for sympathy (i.e. the "sympathiser" must minimally apprehend the other's feelings). Yet although these examples (cited by Scheler or very similar to his) conform to his criteria of sympathy I find it difficult to use this term to describe either situation.

Turning to the second question it asks, in effect, whether we experience the givenness of our own feelings in identification in the same way as we grasp the other's feelings. Scheler points out that self-knowledge is more difficult to acquire than knowledge of others just because we are so close to ourselves. We feel that our special intimacy with our personal history in all its convolutions gives us a privileged view, a seat in the front stalls of our own private drama. But this is not a sufficient reason for supposing that self-perception is any different from other-perception; the givenness of real world phenomena (including ourselves) occurs only in certain conditions. For Scheler this includes the quiescence of the sensory and spiritual levels of being (the twin locations of personal identity) and the function of vital consciousness where alone identification with another is possible. Since we cannot identify with ourselves (for each of us is a single centre of consciousness irrespective of the level of being of which we are conscious) it seems to follow that self-knowledge is only possible when identifying with

another. In the quiescent and other conditions of Scheler or in my attitude of openness towards, and non-manipulative acceptance of, the other, the twin experiences of self and other are separate, or rather the feelings of self and other are grasped and intuitively understood as separate phenomena in the single experience of the givenness of the Self-Other relationship which includes the context and relevant prehistory. Scheler quotes Schiller:

If you would know yourself, take heed of the practice of others;
If you would understand others, look to your own heart within you.

It seems hardly necessary to draw attention to the differences between Scheler's sympathy and my empathy. In empathy the similarities and differences between the participants, grasped intuitively in passive consciousness, form the basis of further exploration in deliberate identification which may ultimately lead to joint action in pursuit of a shared common goal or ideal. Deliberate identification plays no part in sympathy. Moreover, although concern for the other is a consequence rather than an element of sympathy, joint action is an essential element of empathy as I construe it; it is in this joint action phase that differences are resolved (as far as they can ever be), personhoods are established and ideally mutual love created leading to a regeneration of the whole cycle as previously described.

The third question I shall not attempt for to do so would involve me in a critical study of Scheler's whole philosophical scheme. The four levels of being are related to his hierarchical innate system of values (the "*ordo amoris*") which in turn constitutes one of the cornerstones of his philosophical edifice. I pose the question because I think the articulation of the vital level of being with the sensory (the lowest level) on the one hand, and with the spiritual level (the highest level) on the other, is problematical. The level of spirit is the region of the person and is therefore the locus of action since a person is a focus of actions within a single psychophysical individual. It is persons who love, who have (genuine) fellow-feeling; yet it is at the level of vital consciousness, the organic level where individuals may identify with one another, with other living things and, in certain circumstances, with the inanimate universe.

One point of articulation is love for in love, as we have seen, we become aware of our separateness from the other even when fusing with him or her in unconscious identification. While consciousness of our unique beingness resides in the highest and lowest levels, our sense of unity with others lies at the organic or vital, intermediate level. It is as though the sphere of our psychic life rolled from its place at the vital centre of our being sometimes towards the sensory, bodily level of consciousness and sometimes towards the spiritual, on an emotional see-saw pivoted on the fulcrum of love.

In summary we can say that, for the purpose of the study of empathy, Scheler's emotional identification counts among its predisposing conditions:

- (a) the suspension of activity at the levels of biological mechanism and of person;
- (b) a world view which recognises and acknowledges a continuity among all living things and, by analogy, among the non-living also in terms of their intrinsic beingness;
- (c) a spontaneous act of love in which the sympathiser is moved to reach out to the other.

Identification is spontaneous, unconscious and necessary for sympathy to occur; it is through identification that we experience the other's givenness and our own but always within the framework of a specific situation involving the two (or more) participants. In Scheler's account it seems that although the "sympathiser" first identifies with the other and experiences the other's and his or her own givenness the self also grasps the givenness of the whole situation, i.e. is able to apprehend the dynamic pattern involving self, other, and their respective states and feelings. From the point of view of the theory of empathy presented here the outcome of unconscious identification (comparable to the outcome of my "givenness of the other in passive consciousness") could as well be a move towards the development of empathy as to an act of sympathy. (But we would have to exclude those superficial and condescending forms that Scheler counts as sympathy, because they reflect attitudes in the self that are antipathetic to openness, respect, and non-manipulative regard for the other.)

2.35 Attraction

It is a common enough experience for one human being to feel attracted towards (or repelled by) another. It is characteristic of this experience that it occurs on first acquaintance (though it can also develop later in the relationship) and is usually immediate in its impact; we take an instant like or dislike to someone at our first meeting. In the former case there often follows a willingness or readiness (given that the other offers signs of encouragement or, at the very least, no obvious signs of discouragement) to reach out, or move towards the other, to want to get to know him or her better. This urge may persist even in the face of the other's indifference, resistance, or resentment.

Attraction is not inconsistent with the empathic relation and may well follow from the self's attitude of openness towards the other and the self's spontaneous experience of the other's givenness in passive consciousness. In such a way may the self be drawn to the other through recognising the characteristics they share although differences will also be grasped, but not resolved, at this stage. Stewart in his account of empathy invokes Freud's notion of positive transference which resembles the phenomenon of attraction. In Freudian theory positive transference refers to a spontaneous affection for another, an urge to bask in the warmth of the other's support, to find in the other security and safety. It is essentially a dependency relation, in which one person spontaneously and unconsciously identifies with another in the sense of wanting to do whatever will maintain the other's protective warmth. Negative transference, in contrast, refers to the experience of the other's rejection or hostility which is felt as a diminution of the self, a devaluation of the self's worth. Transference in either sense may not accurately reflect the state of the real world. A self may perceive another incorrectly as warm (or hostile); the self may be misled by his or her own distorting tendencies, desires, and so forth, or by the other's manipulative skills and wiles. Nevertheless the experience is real enough as are its felt consequences. Whilst it is obvious that a person in positive transference is attracted to the other, alternative explanations for this reaching out come to mind,

each with a different theoretical base. One centres on the empathic relation as described in this dissertation and as briefly illustrated at the beginning of this paragraph. Although Stewart's theory of empathy(53) includes an unconscious stage (involving Freud's notion of transference) my own does not. Only a prior non-manipulative openness to the world is necessary in order to promote or facilitate the occurrence of the givenness of the other in passive consciousness.

Another alternative draws on the nature of the power relation in which a self sees in the other that which he or she wants and which sufficiently motivates the self to get to know the other better in order to satisfy his or her desires. An obvious example is sexual attraction but many of the relations which Berne(54) discusses in his study of the "games people play" depend on the perceived attractiveness of others as sources of the satisfaction of one's own wants. We may feel drawn to another because the other has instrumental value for us. I am not suggesting that all sexual attraction is accounted for in terms of an incipient power relation. Love (as I conceptualise it and Scheler also) is at least as likely a source of the other's sexual attractiveness.

Similarly a self may feel repelled by another either because the other appears to be unable or unwilling to satisfy the self's wants or because the other adopts a manipulative approach towards the self. The other may be genuinely hostile or the self may misperceive the other either through genuine misunderstanding or because of the other's social ineptness or because of the self's own personal inadequacies which tend to distort his or her perception of others.

It follows from these and similar considerations that the accurate perception of others is one determinant of the quality of the attraction that one self may feel for another, which in turn will affect the depth of the relations entered into. At one extreme the perceived similarities and differences are superficial; or they may be rather more than skin-deep in the sense that a self's perceptions penetrate beneath the other's "surface"; or, at the other extreme, a self profoundly grasps the other. In the context of the theory of empathy presented in these pages the last may be a function of the

empathic relation since in empathy differences are explored and hence the personhoods of both members of the relation are grasped and understood in both passive and active consciousness. As a consequence the likenesses and differences are grasped in depth to the enhancement of both members. Perception of little more than surface similarities suggests an impersonal relation, in which the other is an object of interest in relation to a self's wants; only those aspects of the other which have an instrumental value to the self merit attention. It may also signal an incipient power relation though it is questionable how far power relations can be maintained (in the absence of coercion) with only a superficial understanding of the other. The depth to which the likenesses and differences are explored may range from superficial to deep depending on the manipulator's perception of the other's value to him or her. According to the present theory, in the absence of goodwill and openness towards the other's nature, it seems unlikely that a self will perceive the other's givenness much beyond the obvious. Moreover in the power relation the manipulator's self-interest will tend to have a distorting effect on such experience of the other's givenness as he or she does have.

2.36 Freud's view of identification

Freud very clearly differentiated between identification and object-cathexis though they have a superficial resemblance and both processes form profoundly influential emotional ties with others:

(Identification) is a very important form of attachment to someone else, probably the very first, and not the same thing as the choice of an object. The difference between the two can be expressed in some such way as this. If a boy identifies himself with his father, he wants to *be like* his father; if he makes him the object of his choice, he wants to *have* him, to possess him. (55)

The distinction between "having" and "being" he never explored again though there is a diary entry which shows that much later in his life the issue still concerned him:

July 12. "Having" and "being" in children. Children like expressing an object-relation by an identification: "I am the object". "Having" is the later of the two; after loss of the object it relapses into "being". Example: the breast. "The breast is part of me, I am the breast." Only later: "I have it" - that is, "I am not it"... (56)

Identification in the first passage is to be understood as "the assimilation of one ego by another", that is to say, the process of "coming to resemble another", "becoming another". The outcome of this process is that:

...the first ego behaves like the second in certain respects, imitates it and in a sense takes it up into itself.(57)

In this passage Freud's and Scheler's conception of the term seem very much alike. The sense of emotional unity between the two persons (and possibly between one person and an animal or thing) is very strong in both accounts. Freud goes so far as to liken identification to "oral, cannibalistic incorporation of the other person". Assimilation cannot be more intimate than for one individual to become the flesh and blood of another. However, in this same passage he refers to modelling:

In the first case (i.e. identification) his ego is altered on the model of his father; in the second case (i.e. object-choice) that is not necessary. Identification and object-choice are to a large extent independent of each other; it is however possible to identify oneself with someone whom, for instance, one has taken as a sexual object, and to alter one's ego on his model.(58)

Freud considers another case: homosexuality. The young male homosexual has identified with (become) his mother who formerly was his object-choice. Now he must alter his ego to be like her and so, for example, love boys like himself in the same way as his mother loved him:

The boy represses his love for his mother: he puts himself in her place, identifies with her, and takes his own person as a model in whose likeness he chooses the new objects of his love...the boys whom he loves as he grows up are after all only substitutive figures and revivals of himself in childhood - boys whom he loves in the way in which his mother loved him... (59)

Modelling oneself on another and incorporating or assimilating another into oneself seem to be entirely different metaphors, referring to quite different phenomena, despite the fact that they nevertheless arrive at the same end: "to make the same". That Freud used both metaphors suggests that he perceived the difference and felt that both form part of the process he called identification. It is possible that "having" and "being" on the one hand and assimilation and modelling on the other are somehow related. Let us explore this possibility.

Freud mentions a strange property of the ego. Having pointed to the distinction between identification and object-choice (wanting "to be" someone or something and wanting "to have" that person or thing) he goes on:

...the distinction, that is, depends upon whether the tie attaches to the subject or to the object of the ego.(60)

There cannot be a subject of the ego unless we invent a transcendental "I", a quest which preoccupied Husserl all his life. As Schutz (61) has remarked it is difficult to see how such an entity could ever be discovered. Be that as it may it is doubtful whether Freud had such a notion in mind. A few lines further on he seems to admit as much: "It is much more difficult to give a clear metapsychological representation of the distinction". The simplest meaning one can attach to the idea is to say that the ego (the executive institution of personality) is intelligible only as a subject "I" standing before a predicate. The predicate may refer to an action or a state; chief among these are "have" and "be" respectively. Such a far-ranging interpretation of "have" enables us to include all actions under this single term by imagining that every action implies mastery over what is acted upon. To be master or mistress of something is to possess it. In this case the emotional tie to an object both confirms and expresses that feeling of mastery, of possession. What I possess I love. Thus the object of "having" is also the object of the ego possessing it. The ego is tied to the object. In the case of "I am" (and similarly for "become") the meaning is unclear without a further reference to the subject "I" through a complement, e.g. "I am father"; "I am mother". The subject "I" and the complement are one and the same. Therefore the emotional tie is to the "I" (the ego as subject) because it is tied to its complement, that which is sought after and which is assimilated by the ego.

Arguing along these linguistic lines we might try to test the relevance of the idea of modelling which Freud introduces in the next sentence: "We can only see that identification endeavours to mould a person's ego after the fashion of the one that has been taken as a model". In his examples only a single trait or characteristic is taken over by the identifying ego. Partial identifications appear to

be typical though in the evolution of the superego the source of the ideal, and therefore the ideal itself, seem to be taken over completely. In this case too Freud uses the analogy of modelling. It seems to me that Freud's distinction between "having" and "being" is the distinction between wanting to be like someone (perhaps because that person stands in a certain relationship with another that the desiring ego would like to enjoy) and wanting to have certain properties of another person (because that person obtains certain advantages through his possession of them which the desiring ego would like to enjoy). In other words the distinction rests on what is desired: the whole person and his relationship with another, or selected attributes of a person and the power or advantages that they confer. "To be strong like father" is not at all the same as "to be like father". In the first case one merely wishes to possess what father has whereas in the second case one wants to be father in his entirety, in short to supplant him but in a fashion which father will accept and possibly admire and praise.(62) The notion of modelling might be useful in the former case perhaps by the simple device of imitating the desired trait whereas the second calls for nothing less than total or near total assimilation. Scheler appears to me to be right in assigning this aspect of Freud's conception of the identification process to emotional infection in its purest form: emotional unity with someone. The idea of modelling appears not only inappropriate but irrelevant. However, when and if the identification process becomes conscious then modelling must surely play a part for the simpler process of imitation is quite inadequate to explain the subtleties and complexities of this more elaborate and directive form of identification. Stewart makes much of conscious identification (and even uses the term "re-identification") in his account of the empathic process.

In my account of empathy unconscious identification plays no part, its place being taken by the experience of the other's givenness in passive consciousness. Deliberate identification in contrast plays a crucial role.

2.37 Love

Love is construed here as an effortless, spontaneous act or movement towards the loved object. It is centred on the beingness of the loved object (the personhood in the case of human beings). It is accepting, non-judgemental, non-manipulative and cannot be explained in terms of reasons. One just loves the loved object for and in itself, for and in its unique beingness and livingness. Love has nothing to do with physical or psychological properties of the loved person except to the extent that it is through them that the expressiveness of the loved one is made manifest. What is grasped in love is the loved one's unique nature (i.e. his or her personal identity).

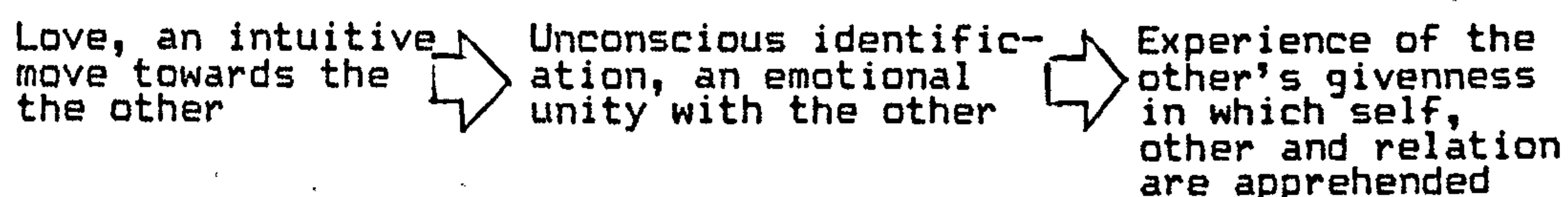
To perceive and focus on a particular physical trait (e.g. blue eyes) or a set of physical characteristics (a well-proportioned and finely shaped face) or to give special attention to psychological traits (eager, stubborn, quick-witted, compassionate) even if these should display themselves as persistent tendencies, is to fragment, typify and label a complex individual in terms of contingent properties, however stable. Is this individual always eager, compassionate, etc? Is the whole of the person expressed in the finely wrought face? And do these features never change, according to mood for instance? Even if we could list a million traits our position would be no better. In fact if anything our plight would be worse since the variability we know to be characteristic of all living beings would overwhelm our ability to grasp. No set of characteristics, not even a totality of them, can possibly declare the nature of a person.

The lover loves the loved one's whole being, faults and all (insofar as faults are admitted by the other him or herself or construed as such by the lover). In love we do not discriminate between aspects of the loved one's nature. Some characteristics may cause us pain and sorrow and we may wish that the one we love chose less self-limiting ways of behaving. We may actually dislike and disapprove of some of his or her actions and attitudes. None of this, however, detracts from our love. It is as though, in addition to loving the person as he or she is, we love them for what they might become.

Love need owe nothing to the lover's appreciation of the loved one's potential nor to the hope that it may be realised at some time in the future.

A person evolves over time in action which necessarily involves interaction with others; thus may the nature of a person become manifest in all its fullness. We can grasp it but never describe it. Description atomises and fragments. In love description is unnecessary for the loved one's individual personality is in his or her expressiveness here and now before the lover.

Where love is absent there can be no genuine fellow-feeling because without love there can be no spontaneous, non-manipulative reaching out towards the other which must precede any experience of the other's givenness. As I have said several times only persons can create persons for only persons can love. Persons approach others in a spirit of openness and with a non-manipulative attitude. To act thus is to love the other in the sense described above. We may therefore equate love as an act with the initial spontaneous movement towards another which initiates any interpersonal relation of a supportive or enhancing kind (sympathy or empathy). This we have already seen in Scheler's unconscious identification in the sense of emotional unity with the other, a fusion of the two in a positive emotional ambience such that their separate identities are for a moment lost. This unconscious process also precipitates the other's givenness in which the knower apprehends self, other and their relation directly and immediately as a pure "perceptual" act. The sequence thus looks like this:



According to Scheler there can be no movement towards emotional fusion with the other without love; there can be no experience of the other's givenness without unconscious identification. For me the essential predisposing factor is the stance of non-manipulative openness.

We are now in a better position to appreciate Fromm's analysis of love.(63) His four elements are aspects of love. Respect (as he defines it) is a consequence of the experience of the other's givenness; we perceive afresh the other as he, she, or it is, here and now. Likewise knowledge, responsibility and caring are consequences. In empathy we get to know the loved one not only through the process illustrated above but also through deliberate identification. Responsibility (as Fromm defines it) will be that much more sensitive, appropriate and other-enhancing (or merely supportive in a sympathetic response) as a consequence of our love. Caring as an action system is clearly a consequence of genuine fellow-feeling, either sympathetic or empathic.

We may also compare the account of love given here (based substantially on Scheler but diverging from his in that I do not accept his innate system of values; neither, on the other hand, do I reject it) with Freud's notion of transference which Stewart accepts as the first stage in his theory of empathy: the pre-empathy phase. For Freud transference is a positive (or negative) bond formed with another out of a craving or need for the other's support and emotional warmth. Essentially it amounts to an affection involving dependence. The negative form, resentment, appears to be a yearning for support and emotional warmth which the other frustrates by his or her off-putting or even hostile response. Clearly transference is not a loving response; in love we make no demands of the loved one.

It will be apparent that sexual behaviour has little to do with love. It is neither a consequence of love (we can love another without any sexual involvement at all) nor is love necessary for sexual behaviour, an obvious enough fact. All that we can say is that if in sexual intercourse two people love each other in the senses described above then in addition to emotional unity they establish a physical unity which is unique in that the emotional and physical experiences mutually reinforce each other creating a single personal experience. Each is literally fused at all levels of being with the other. It is perhaps the most perfect and sublime empathic act, in which each is aware of his or her separateness and yet of unity with the other, an awareness which amplifies their mutual love.

Love is not a deliberate act; we cannot will to love. Either we love spontaneously or we do not love at all. Empathy on the other hand (unlike sympathy) is deliberate in its final phase. We have to work at it. It is our love which provides this effort; goodwill is good trying, as Stewart says. An essential precondition then for love is a willingness to accept real phenomena as they are, a readiness to respond to the beingness of things (their livingness in the case of living entities). This is the spirit of openness which I have discussed elsewhere. Additionally we need to cultivate a non-manipulative approach to others. The alternative view is to suppose that we have an innate readiness to love, an instinct. Scheler appears to incline to this view. I am reluctant to appeal to instinct though I do accept, at least as a tentative hypothesis, that we have a ready-made capacity to "read" the expressiveness of others. This is certainly true of lower animals. The wildebeest grasps instantly the significance of the crouching posture or lunging movements of the lioness. Imprinting, the freeze response of some animals in the presence of predators, courtship rituals, and similar response systems offer evidence of this innate ability. Whether we call it instinct and notwithstanding that learning may influence actual behaviour (for example, predators become more adept with practice; so do their prey at avoiding them) it seems clear that ability to recognise and decode body signs is part of the healthy animal's innate repertoire. There is no reason to suppose that we humans are not similarly equipped though, as Scheler remarks, we may have lost touch with our native gifts due to the predominant use of our intellect.

Love has to be learned; there is much evidence to support this view. Those deprived of maternal love in early childhood tend to show in adulthood a poor or even a total lack of loving responsiveness to others. Love-deprived children tend to grow into unloving, even cruel, parents.

My view, as I have already shown in Chapter 1, is that persons (who are creations of persons) love others because they have learned love from those who cared for them, principally their mothers. As the only relation which can achieve this is empathy we can say that per-

sons are the creations of the empathic relation which too has to be learned. Empathy is the progenitor of love and personhood. Love and persons are the progenitors of empathy. There is little reward in pursuing the chicken and egg conundrum; empathy is regenerated through love and love creates and sustains empathy. Which we take to be pivotal depends solely on our specific interest: the relation or the emotional bond. The two are inseparable.

One final point. Stewart claims no more than respect as a first step in the process of entering into an empathic relation; if we interpret respect in the sense that Fromm does it is easy to construe respect as a possible first step in the learning of love. In my theory of empathy openness and a non-manipulative attitude create the goodwill necessary to reach out towards another individual and as a result experience the other's givenness. This engenders respect and ultimately love if the empathic relation is successfully established; love may then become mutual in mutual empathy.

2.38 Altruism

Derek Wright defines an action as altruistic

when its outcome is primarily beneficial to someone else, and its performance is dictated by the desire to help another person. Faced with the choice between personal convenience or advantage and furthering someone else's goals, the individual deliberately chooses the latter.(64)

Self-sacrifice is a problem for biologists since it apparently flouts the basic tenets of evolution theory but for psychologists the interest is not so much in its biological roots as in the nature and psychological significance of unselfishness for both the performer and the beneficiary. My interest centres on its relation to empathy.

In most societies adults adopt a nurturant and protective attitude towards the young, especially infants, and men act protectively towards women at least in some stressful situations such as attack by invaders. In many societies women put their children and their menfolk before themselves and in all societies loyalty to friends is accorded high value especially in conditions of threat, hardship or survival. In all these cases the self-sacrificing individual has already formed a strong attachment to the other as a function of the

normal social life of the group to which he or she belongs. Insofar as altruistic behaviour is a consequence of an already existing attachment (and notwithstanding that consequences of emotional bonds are interesting in themselves) I shall not examine altruism further.

The only question that needs answering in terms of the aims of this dissertation is whether altruism is or may be a consequence of one or more of the emotional bonds reviewed in this section. The obvious candidate is sympathy but, as I have already pointed out, empathy is an even better choice especially in its mutual form. However, sympathy appears to provide the minimum conditions for initiating an act which could be described as altruistic; the "primitive" givenness of the participants and their situation, the sympathiser's awareness of separateness, and a genuine fellow-feeling, appear to me to constitute the minimum combination of objectivity and emotional impetus that will move an individual to act unselfishly.

2.39 Friendship

Of all the emotional bonds discussed in this chapter friendship in one of its forms comes very close to empathy as I construe it. Unlike the other bonds explored here friendship is really a member of a different category: the class of sociable relationships. This category includes kin, neighbours, work colleagues, class-mates, club members, etc., as well as friends. Participants in any of these social groupings may, from time to time, display any of the emotional bonds described in this chapter. One might argue that, by virtue of their membership of sociable relationships, individuals are more likely to create these emotional bonds than they are as a result of their membership of more remote and abstract groups such as secondary groups, for example. Primary groups, in which members are in face-to-face contact and share some common fate (e.g. living in the same street, working on the same job, having the same sport or hobby interests), are more likely to generate the conditions leading to the facilitation, perhaps the evolution, of deeper, less transitory bonds than secondary groups which centre on, for example, nationality, regional accent, community, occupational group, employer, gender, social class, and so forth.

The distinction I am making between the differential influence of primary and secondary groups on the formation of strong emotional bonds such as love, sympathy, empathy (as I understand it), and so on is not as clear cut as I have perhaps implied. Many sociologists would argue that membership of secondary groups can have an inhibiting effect, generating hostile rather than friendly feelings. For example, individuals who are deeply conscious of their social status may be unable to feel sympathy with others not of their class. Women, profoundly affected by their perception of men as exploiters of women's sexual attractiveness, may be rendered incapable of feeling anything but hostility towards men.

I would argue, however, that if these negative states of affairs are to be remedied (apart, of course, from the obvious tactic of removing whatever immediate and tangible causes feature in the actual lives of those with negative feelings such as long-term unemployment, gender, race and class discrimination, etc.) it will only come about through personal contact with more supportive others, in other words, through primary group membership. (I assume that dyads count as groups.) There is no guarantee that belonging to such a group will encourage the growth of a different, more reassuring world view but personal contact with just one supportive person makes such a change possible. Even where immediate causes are not remedied those who suffer may draw closer to the supportive individual despite differences, in the examples I have given, of social class membership or gender or race or employment.

This fact alone supports my claim that friendship is a different category of sociable relationship entirely. Friendship may or may not provide a fertile soil in which empathic relations may take root, and eventually prosper. But it is certainly not necessary. Empathic relations require only that one person approach another with non-manipulative, non-judgemental, non-exploitative openness. The other may not only have excluded him or herself from the possibility of a friendly relationship springing up between the two; he or she may be positively hostile. Of course, it follows that, if an empathic relation is eventually achieved and the participants discover interpersonal harmony, they may become friends, perhaps even very close,

life-long friends; but again this is not a necessary outcome for claiming that two individuals have achieved an empathic relation.

Quite apart from the category distinction there are other reasons for distinguishing friendship and the empathic relation. Friendship implies a reciprocity which, incidentally, is commonly reported as an experiential quality of friendship. One may seek a favour from a friend but both tacitly accept the obligation to render a return favour when asked. Friends generally do not like seeking favours from each other if there seems little likelihood of repaying the gesture in the foreseeable future. Part of the notion of reciprocity resides in the symmetry of the friendship relationship. The members see themselves as equals. Usually this is true in the sense that friends tend to have the same interests, social class membership, gender, age group, and other similar personal characteristics. Research evidence supports this tendency.(65) Finally, friends know who their friends are because they are called so by them. There is, that is to say, an overtly expressed mutual labelling of the members of the friendship relationship as "friends". Reciprocity as elaborated here(66) may well emerge when an empathic relation is achieved but it does not necessarily follow. Neither is it necessary in the initial or intermediate stages. I have tried to show that differences can be recognised and accepted as part of life. They do not have to lead to divisive conduct or attitude, nor does it follow that empathic relations cannot come about among individuals who differ in any or all of the contingent ways that society, genetic endowment or experience can produce. On the contrary, and despite obvious potential difficulties, I suggest that fostering empathic relations with others in significant contexts provides an alternative to the more frequently encountered preference for developing power relations. Difficult implies neither impossible nor hopelessly idealistic.

Another characteristic which differentiates friendship from the empathic relation is that the former tends to endure over time despite intermittent interactions. Meetings of friends are like islands of a special kind of sociability in a sea of generally mundane day-to-day life experiences, some of which may be other kinds of sociability. Each interaction confirms and reaffirms the friendship in a number

of ways including the clarification of what the friends allow by way of self-disclosure and interpersonal conduct. Setting and clarifying boundaries constitutes an important aspect of friendship. The relationship tends to persist despite the frequent and sometimes lengthy absences of the members of the relationship. There are obviously limits to this tendency and, as is well known, friends do fall out or drift apart for all sorts of reasons. Nevertheless, a degree of permanence and frequent separations are typical characteristics of friendship.

As I understand the empathic relation, the mutual co-presence of its members is essential for its initiation and growth. Individuals can and do enter and leave the empathic relation. Since its existence hinges on its significance to its members, e.g. striving towards mutual self-help, the relation may change as members' perceptions of what counts as significant changes. The empathic relation is one of many interpersonal relations into which people may enter throughout their day-to-day commerce with the world. But once individuals have enjoyed the sense of personal fulfilment which the empathic relation engenders they may come to prefer this relation over all others provided the occasion warrants it. Thus it may happen that these individuals having experienced the joys of the empathic relation become friends. In such a case the burgeoning friendship and the preference for empathising as a *modus vivendi* whenever possible may grow in parallel. Even then, however, the friendship will tend to persist despite the friends' frequent separations whereas empathising will always require the co-presence of the members.

One last difference between empathising and enjoying a friendship relation hinges on the notion of authenticity. I have suggested that every interaction between friends permits each of them to establish boundaries of intimacy. Most interpersonal relations by their nature, occasion and frequency make little demand on the other's willingness to extend these boundaries. Putting the matter another way, the private zone tends to be considerably larger than the public in most interactions with others including the more superficial types of friendship. Our everyday existence is patterned by a wide range of interactions with others. Some are fairly long-standing and rela-

tively informal such as those with neighbours and work colleagues. Others are casual such as those which may arise at parties and similar social gatherings. Yet others are occasional and more or less formal such as visits to our doctor or dentist or legal adviser. Genuine friendships may grow out of any of these encounters but much more is required than a commonality of interest, frequency of contact, or even liking for one another. In particular, the label "friendship" is usually reserved for that special informal relationship with another in which voluntary self-disclosure is a central feature; this depends on the development of mutual trust which in turn takes time and effort on both sides (assuming a dyadic relationship).⁽⁶⁷⁾ Only after a period of time will the partners in the relation consider extending the limits of intimacy. The closeness of their friendship might be signalled by their degree of trust in each other and by their willingness to disclose, and the extent to which they are prepared to reveal, their private thoughts and feelings.

The borderline between genuine and fair weather friendship is not always clear to members. Often it takes a calamity to discover who one's real friends are. In genuine friendship help and support are given unstintingly if they are within the power of friends to give or procure. Superficial friends offer only excuses for their inability to help. The existence of a genuine caring relation with another is tested by observing actual caring conduct. This may take many forms from advice to practical assistance including, on occasion, reproof. Friends may say what others shrink from saying for fear of giving offence, causing pain, or embarrassing the other.

Recognising and coping with dissembling behaviour are as difficult tasks in friendships as they are within empathic relations but the point I am making here is that authenticity is as fundamental to friendship as goodwill is to empathy. Both also depend on openness though friendship does not require a non-judgemental approach, or at least it seems not to suffer from a lack of it on occasion.

Perhaps it is this caring attitude towards another that distinguishes genuine from superficial friendship. Caring is an attribute of love; I find it difficult to reconcile the idea of friendship with a

relationship devoid of love if only in its most primitive form: respect for the other. Authenticity in a relationship probably encourages the cultivation of a non-manipulative, though not necessarily a non-judgemental, stance towards the other. Thus, such a relationship may evolve into either friendship or an empathic relation depending primarily on the situation. If a person feels a genuine regard for the other and demonstrates in concrete ways a caring attitude, the other may respond by similar feelings of warmth and caring attitudes. The mixture of mutual liking, warmth and support remains, in this example, relatively unfocussed, diffuse, non-directional. This is not to deny the value of such a relationship nor to imply that it is ethically of small account in personal relationships. Perhaps a great many friendships are formed out of these simple elements. Friends seek and enjoy each other's company; they bathe in their mutual feelings of warmth; they care about and for each other in their different ways and according to their individual capacities to succour and nurture others. The profit to both may be considerable, intellectually, socially, spiritually, perhaps even physically, including sexually.

The route to the empathic relation is quite different. The non-manipulative, non-judgemental, non-exploitative openness always precedes (for the reasons I have given elsewhere) the move towards identification perhaps through imitation. This leads to the joint venture in which the participants pursue a shared common goal. This is much more than a sharing of warmth, caringness and authentic personal feelings for each other. Empathy is never diffuse, non-directional, unfocussed which is not to deny that, because of human limitations, both partners may sometimes lose sight of where they are going and why.

As I have tried to show in my earlier analysis the empathic relation may lead to friendship as often as friendship may encourage the friends to discover empathy. In either case the kind of friendship I am referring to is genuine and close, sometimes very close. In such a friendship the empathic relation would give point to the drawing in of boundaries of intimacy. Personal knowing in specific and significant contexts would underscore the intimacy of the friendship if

the latter already existed; the trust and mutual disclosures cherished in the empathic relation would create it if it did not.

Intimacy seems to me the crucial quality of genuine friendship. This is not the place to explore the relationship between intimacy, trust, self-disclosure and authentic friendship. However, I feel that self-disclosure is only possible within the psychological safety of a relationship founded on mutual trust, caring about and, whenever necessary, for each other. In the security of such a protective relation intimacy may grow. I imagine that it is characteristic of authentic persons (persons who do not seek refuge in pretence, deceit, affectation or false emotions) to want to care about and for those to whom they feel drawn. To put the matter more dramatically I cannot imagine insincere people developing genuine friendships. If they do achieve such a seemingly impossible state then I imagine that a rare authenticity shines like a beacon amid the shoals of their more customary falseness. Even the most insincere individual must be able, we might assume, to summon up the honesty and the will to establish an authentic relationship with at least one other person. Such a conjecture needs further study. Thus authenticity, trust and setting boundaries of intimacy are inextricably intertwined. Their interdependency is what makes genuine friendship very similar to the empathic relation.

2.4 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have developed the idea of empathy as a relation by examining various kinds of relation which a self may enter into with an other-than-self. Some relations involve other human beings while others centre on non-human entities both living and non-living. Since I construe empathy as a relation in which one person tries to know and understand another as a person and since also I have tried to show that there are other ways of knowing than personal knowing and other ways of construing human beings than as persons I decided to follow this same route in order to discover other relations. This attempt yielded the quasi-empathic and the impersonal

but failed to give other known relations , e.g. formal, informal, power; these were added to the list. It is interesting to note that they tend to emphasise modes of existence rather than ways of knowing. Where empathy and quasi-empathy grow out of a being mode of existence the other relations, except the fortuitous, have an affinity with the having mode. The impersonal is ambivalent and may be tenable in either mode. These conjectures merit further analysis but not within the narrow scope of this dissertation. By analogy I tried to show that relations with non-human entities could, at a pinch, be accommodated within the interpersonal set.

Empathy is also an emotional bond between people, and between humans and non-humans at least in one direction. Therefore I examined other kinds of emotional bond. As in the case of relations there is no theoretical framework to help me choose a definitive set. Instead I relied on a general knowledge of the literature on emotional bonds. I do not claim that my list is exhaustive but for my purposes incompleteness does not really matter. As with relations so with emotional bonds my aim was to examine further the concept and phenomenon of empathy by comparing it with as many near or distant relatives as I could muster. The most interesting features of this second comparison derive from the interdependency of some bonds and empathy, e.g. love, attraction, and the close similarity of others to empathy, e.g. sympathy, community of feeling. However the differences too are considerable and exposing these rounds out a fuller picture of empathy.

Notes for Chapter 2

- 1 A recent publication (Argyle and Henderson, 1985) brings together much of the research evidence about the nature of human relationships and adds a number of new perspectives on this branch of psychology. The authors do not say explicitly that the work describes the variety of human relationships, their individual characters, the features they have in common as well as those which differentiate them, but without an all-embracing theoretical framework. It seems very likely that in this field description is still the most valuable contribution to our understanding of this fundamental aspect of human existence.

There are many typologies of human individuals, i.e. category systems which classify people according to some theoretical schema. Most personality theories include personality or character types as part of their mythology. The extent to which these theories are grounded (in the opinion of their authors) in physical phenomena determines their standing as hard or soft theories. Freudian and Jungian schemata are bold, speculative adventures in imagination and so are soft whereas Eysenck's theory, to take one example, is hard being based on known (and hypothesised) characteristics of the central nervous system. In contrast attempts to classify relations among individuals are rare. Behind most personality theories there is usually an implicit (sometimes explicit) notion that one individual is trying to do something to another. The ego defence mechanisms of Freud, the parent-child-adult interactions of transactional analysis, are essentially descriptions of how people cope with one another; they differ only in their theoretical base. The analysis of relations *per se*, however, seems to have interested very few. There are grounds for supposing that the attempt would be ill-conceived. Since part of the genesis and nurturance of a relation, it might plausibly be argued, is rooted in the situation in which the participants find themselves, and that situations are so complex and diverse that they defy generalisation, the task of establishing a general theory of interpersonal relations is a hopeless one. A counter-argument might be that this sentiment expresses a counsel of despair. All theories begin with chaotic real world phenomena; the theorist's job is to

reduce this chaos with the help of some well-chosen concepts which, whilst retaining a grip on real world phenomena, nevertheless transcend them in fruitful ways. For example, ways of knowing might provide means for condensing the great diversity of interpersonal situations without distorting the real world experiences of human beings too much. My own speculations in the early part of this chapter (sections 2.1 and 2.2) constitute just such an exercise though my main purpose is to throw additional light on empathy.

- 2 See Alexander, 1964, Appendix 1. The use to which I put Alexander's design process in my illustrations is my own interpretation of his ideas.
- 3 I have freely borrowed from Alexander's analysis of the design process which he outlines in Part 1 especially in chapters 2 and 3. There are many theories of the aesthetic process but Alexander's analysis treats design in the abstract. So often aesthetics is associated with the arts particularly the plastic and graphic forms. Although in my choice of illustrations I have tended to follow this tradition the basic idea of goodness of fit between form and context is universally applicable. Theory-building, cake-making, lesson-planning, running a trades union conference: all involve aesthetic knowing, among other forms of knowing, to some degree.
- 4 As an entirely speculative aside we may wonder whether there are territorial claims by various art forms over the various ways of construing human beings with, say, the plastic or graphic arts at the biological machine end of the row and the arts of movement, drama and literature (especially the novel) at the psychophysical individual end. Obviously all may concern themselves with human beings as persons but it is common knowledge that certain artists concern themselves with situations or feelings or social attitudes rather than, or in addition to, flesh and blood persons coping with their personal world. Consider, for literary examples, the study of ambition in Julius Caesar and Macbeth; Ibsen's concern over the fate of women in society; Tolstoy's study of war; the nature of crime and its punishment explored by Dostoyevsky.

- 5 For example, see two recent critical accounts: Jacobs and Williams, 1983; and Geller, 1982.
- 6 Shotter, 1975.
- 7 Macmurray, 1956, 1961.
- 8 Reason and Rowan, 1981.
- 9 Harré, 1983.
- 10 Blumer, 1969.
- 11 Turner, 1974.
- 12 Harré and Secord, 1972; Goffman, 1969a, 1969b, 1972.
- 13 I have not enlarged on this aspect of practical knowing of the person because to do so would require a critical review of the social skills literature (an industry with which, as will be apparent in these pages, I have only limited sympathy). In order to counter my own prejudice a thorough-going analysis of this domain would be essential.
- 14 Acts may be described as chance, spontaneous or purposeful according to their volitional content. Two people colliding in the street because neither was looking where he or she was going is truly a chance encounter with no volitional content at all. The fact that each was purposefully engaged at the time has no bearing on the accidental outcome. At the other extreme a fielder at mid-on seeing the ball coming his way and moving to catch or stop it is behaving in a way which we would describe as intentional and willed. He chose to act thus and so acted as he did. Spontaneous acts fall somewhere between the two. In order to experience the other's givenness I have suggested that a self needs to adopt a stance of non-manipulative openness towards the world; he or she must, in Husserl's words, allow things to speak for themselves. This predisposition is a matter of choice, of volition in the sense that the self adopts a certain way of being in the world in order that he or she may experience the spontaneous givenness of phenomena which cannot be willed. The spontaneous act is an event and so is not

volitional but the adoption of the necessary predisposition is. I hold that this is true of all spontaneous acts.

Relations, of course, are not acts but interactions arising from acts. (I am using "act" here rather in the sense of Husserl's "intentional experience", his equivalent of Descartes's "cogito".) Relations are of necessity volitional but may be described as spontaneous, chance or purposeful according to the nature of the act that precipitated them. Since spontaneously and deliberately formed relations have purpose somewhere in their origins I group them together and separate them from relations which arise by chance.

15 Love and other emotional bonds are considered in section 2.3.

16 See especially the work of Stewart, 1956, 1965 briefly summarised in section 3.52.

17 See Appendix 1 for a brief note on subjectivity.

18 Mercer, 1972; p.7.

19 Scheler, 1954; p.45.

20 *ibid.* p.14.

21 *ibid.* p.10.

22 *ibid.* p.11.

23 *ibid.* p.82.

24 *ibid.* p.8.

25 *ibid.* p.31.

26 *ibid.* p.35.

27 *ibid.* p.23.

28 *ibid.* p.48.

29 *ibid.* p.134.

30 *ibid.* p.46.

31 *ibid.* p.18.

32 *ibid.* p.82.

33 See the excerpt at the bottom of p.156

34 Mercer, 1972.

35 Scheler, *op. cit.* p.13.

36 Stein, 1970. See section 3.51.

37 Scheler, *op. cit.* pp.37/38.

38 *ibid.* pp.15/16.

39 *ibid.* p.8.

40 *ibid.* p.25.

41 *ibid.* p.25.

42 *ibid.* pp.20/21.

43 *ibid.* pp.34/35.

44 *ibid.* p.30.

45 *ibid.* p.32.

46 *ibid.* p.33.

47 *ibid.* p.35.

48 *ibid.* p.35.

49 *ibid.* p.35.

50 *ibid.* p.67.

51 *ibid.* p.70.

52 *ibid.* p.71.

53 See section 3.52.

54 Berne, 1966.

55 Freud, Standard Edition, Vol. XXII; p.63.

56 *op. cit.* Vol. XXIII; p.299.

57 op. cit. Vol. XXII; p.63.

58 ibid. p.63.

59 op. cit. Vol XI; p.100.

60 op. cit. Vol XVIII; p.106.

61 Schutz, 1973.

62 The defensive aspect of identification I will not pursue here. Freud himself occasionally uses the term "introjection" to stand for identification in particular contexts. Anna Freud (1967), developed the concept of ego defence mechanisms; she lists ten of them one of which is "identification or introjection".

63 Fromm, 1957.

64 Wright, 1971; p.127.

65 Allan, 1979 refers to several studies; p.45.

66 ibid. p.44,45.

67 Those more or less formal dyads which come into existence primarily for self-disclosure, e.g. confessional and counselling relationships, are excluded. Friendships are essentially informal in character..

3. SOME EARLIER VIEWS OF EMPATHY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The variety of meanings attached to the label "empathy" almost equals the variety of workers in this area of psychology. Although there are a few discernible traditions, which this chapter will explore, the general image of empathy is confusing. I propose to review a very small selection from the literature which seems to me to represent the main thematic streams which I have noticed in my reading. To help me in my literature search I used the computer-based retrieval systems of DIALOG and ERIC. Four trends are observable, each one flowing from a single source.

The first stems from G. H. Mead's notion of role-taking ability. Rosalind Dymond is one of the earliest investigators in this tradition and Hogan one of the most recent. While considering the relation between empathy and role-taking ability I shall also examine a few other students of empathy who appear to view it as an ability or trait though not within Mead's role-theoretic framework. In fact few of these researchers have developed a theoretical schema at all.

The second tradition springs from the work of Carl Rogers who not only helped to shift the emphasis in psychology away from mechanistic theories towards a personal psychology; he also argued that empathy (along with some other elements) forms an essential component of non-manipulative interpersonal functioning. Several followers of Rogers have tried to operationalise his definition of empathy. Some of them (e.g. Carkhuff and Truax) have pursued a path which starts from the idea that empathy is somehow related to social skill (my third stream of investigation) and so they will be discussed under that heading. Barrett-Lennard, however, whilst striving towards an operational definition of empathy has preserved the essence of the Rogerian approach.

As I have just said the third strand is concerned with the acquisition and exercise of social skills. This group is bound together solely by the central idea of skill; they work from different theor-

etical foundations, some using a psychomotor model (Argyle), while others focus on social perception (Bronfenbrenner), or the therapeutic situation (Egan, Carkhuff, Truax).

The fourth tradition I shall call phenomenological though few psychologists will be found here. For me this is one of the most important contributory streams to the understanding of empathy and includes Edith Stein, Scheler (though not for his comments on empathy but rather for his insights into the nature of fellow-feeling, a non-unitary concept which must include empathy), and David Stewart the only psychologist discussed in this section. The methods and outlook of the phenomenological approach are unique in the context of this literature review in that they offer some guide-lines for developing a genuine personal psychology (a psychology of persons) in which empathy occupies a central position. Other attempts, not all of them in the phenomenological tradition, are currently under way, and are to be found in the works of Gauld and Shotter, Harre, Georges Thines, Paul Ricoeur and the Dusquesne group represented by Valle and King, but in none of them does empathy seem to feature.

3.2 EMPATHY AS ABILITY

3.21 Chapin

Years ago Thorndike introduced the notion of social intelligence (to set beside abstract and mechanical intelligence) in order to account for individual differences in interpersonal competence. Social intelligence (or ability as he called it) has two factors: the ability to understand others, and the ability to act wisely in social situations. Chapin, primarily concerned with the second of these two factors, hypothesised "that social intelligence is a form of social insight"(1). The term insight here refers to a psychological phenomenon quite different from that encountered in the literature on problem-solving, for example. Later he expressed the relationship more subtly. Not only is social insight "not the same as the "ability to get along with people", often used as a definition of social intelligence"(2), but also:

...the scale to measure social insight differs from the scales that measure social attitudes, social behaviour, and social intelligence in that it attempts to measure the ability to define (i.e. by classifying, diagnosing, inferring causes, or predicting) a given social situation in terms of the behaviour imputed to others present, rather than in terms of the individual's own feelings about the others.(3)

This reminds us of G H Mead's role-taking ability, which formed the main inspiration for Rosalind Dymond's investigation and attempted measurement of what she called empathic ability(4). During this period social insight, role-taking ability and empathic ability seem to be construed as a capacity to see and interpret the other from the other's point of view, an ability which is viewed as a quality of persons (rather than as a property of relations between persons) in much the same way as some psychologists construe reasoning or verbal ability in the abstract sphere of intelligence or manual dexterity in the mechanical. Since I have adopted the view that empathy is a relation between at least one person and another human being I hold that the quality of relations between the participants is important in any account of empathy. This aspect seems to have been totally ignored by those who see empathy as an ability.

Chapin shows some facility in giving this aspect of social intelligence an operational definition:

Social insight is the ability to recognise in principle in a given situation: (1) the existence and operation of specific substitute responses such as projection, rationalization, regression, sublimation, transference, etc., and (2) the need of some specific stimulus to adjust group conflicts or tensions, such as a humorous remark to relax a dangerous intensity, a suggested compromise to attain temporary agreement, a face-saving remark to avoid embarrassment and to preserve status (to leave a loop hole, a way out, etc.), or to discover the missing part required to complete a pattern of thought (the right formula), etc.(5)

Chapin was careful to point out that there might well be much more to social insight than these suggested elements but in the absence of a stronger theoretical framework than that implied by Thorndike's concept of social intelligence it is difficult to see how he could have developed the idea much further.

3.22 Dymond

In contrast, Dymond did have a strong theoretical basis for her concepts of insight and empathic ability which stem from the role-

theoretic ideas current at that time. She sees empathy as an "ability to feel and describe the feelings and thoughts of others".(6) Later she refined this to: "...the imaginative transposing of one-self into the thinking, feeling and action of another and so structuring the world as he does."(7)

For her empathic ability may be a mechanism underlying insight which she construes as the better understanding of the relationships one has with others. More specifically she sees insight as the:

...understanding of the self-other patterns or roles which the individual has incorporated and which form the basis of his expectations of others, his structuring of his life situations and the place he feels he occupies in them.(8)

Clearly insight here means social insight but her theoretical substrate differentiates her concept from Chapin's:

...when human organisms respond to each other over a period of time, the activity of each becomes a stimulus pattern for a more or less stabilised response pattern in the other providing the motivational component remains essentially unchanged. In any social interaction the acts of the other as well as those of the self are incorporated by each party to the interact as each sees them. Such an internalized interact is known as a self-other pattern. In incorporating the response patterns of others to him the individual evolves a picture of himself as a distinct personality. His personality is, therefore, an aggregate of self-other patterns which have been internalized from his previous interactions with others. These provide him with a series of expectation response patterns which he brings to new and ambiguous situations. In these he acts in terms of his definition of the situation and the position he feels he occupies in it, the particular pattern chosen being a function also of the needs operating at the time and the patterns available to him.(9)

Thus she arrives at her definition of insight and, incidentally, of personality. Her interest in the 1948 paper was to discover whether insight might be developed in people and if so how. A first step, therefore, was to analyse its constituents which meant, as we have just seen, investigating the appropriate self-other patterns. Her data suggested to her a number of relations between her conceptions of insight and empathy:

...the ability to feel and describe the thoughts and feelings of others, (empathy) is accompanied by a better understanding of a relationship one has with others, (insight). Conversely, those who are less able to take the role of the other...seem also to lack insight into their own interpersonal relations...lack of insight into one's own self-other patterns is based on a lack of empathic ability.(10)

Coupled with other trends in her data suggesting "...that empathy is a necessary mechanism for the building of self-other patterns which

are well developed"(11) and that empathic ability is in part a function of the type of family atmosphere surrounding the growing child Dymond concluded "...that empathy may be one of the underlying mechanisms on which insight is based."(12)

In a later paper Dymond teases out a further element of (social) insight. Here she examines related terms such as sympathy, identification and projection as well as taking another look at insight itself.

Insight may be thought of as a product of the empathic process. Insight into oneself seems to require the ability to stand off and look at oneself from the point of view of others. In order to see ourselves as others see us, we need to structure the situation from their perspective or transpose ourselves into their thinking.(13)

The new idea in this excerpt is that since the object of other's consciousness can be one's self, the empathic ability is a prerequisite for self-knowledge or self-understanding. (It is assumed that other's view of one's self does add to one's understanding of self.) This idea raises the question of how one evaluates other kinds of self-knowledge (e.g.introspection, psychoanalysis, etc.) as bases for action in the world. If, for example, "personality is a population of self-other patterns and their interpersonal organisation" (14), then there can be no independent selves in the same way that, say, our bodies are independent, self-sustaining entities. Our so-called real selves, and even ideal selves, exist only through and because of, other selves. Chapters 1 and 2 have in several places touched upon the relation between persons and selves and the relation of both to the experience of personal identity.(15) Personality as Dymond understands it has something in common with my notion of personhood.

For the present let us return to Dymond's study of insight. In the 1950 research she compared subjects' own judgements about themselves with judgements others made about them using agreements as a basis for computing an insight index. This was correlated with empathy scores obtained by computing the accuracy of subjects in predicting others' ratings of themselves on the same personality dimensions. This yielded a coefficient of +0.65 which, she felt, supported her view that insight "seemed to be highly related to the ability to

take the role of the other (empathy)..."(16). We may feel that she is right, therefore, to assert that: "In order to see ourselves as others see us, we need to structure the situation from their perspective or transpose ourselves into their thinking and feeling."
(17)

Dymond's research methodology has been shown to have serious flaws. Here I only want to draw attention to an aspect which has not attracted comment. How are we to understand the idea of self-judgement? What are these judgements we make about ourselves? Are they not reflections of innumerable encounters with others in which we have seen ourselves mirrored in their reactions? In what sense can we say that we make, or can make, independent objective judgements of ourselves? Could not differences between scores on measures of self-judgements and the judgements of self made by others as readily be construed as an indication of the self's distortions of these reflections from the mirrors of others?

3.23 Dymond and Chapin compared

Clearly Dymond and Chapin differ in their conceptions of social insight. The latter is concerned in part with the perception of the other from the other's point of view whereas the former focusses on self-other relationships which moreover are tentatively held to be essential for seeing the world with the other's eyes. Thus Chapin's social insight has much in common with Dymond's empathic ability. On the other hand Dymond's (social) insight has something of the quality of the second element (the ability to get along with people) in Chapin's construal of social intelligence; both centre on self-other relationships and appear to be essentially self-oriented. Other workers at this time seem to have interpreted (social) insight in terms of empathy; Watson, for example, says: "To have correct insight is to share the feeling of him you are observing, to attach the significances appropriate to his part in events."(18)

In view of Chapin's choice of psychoanalytic descriptors as part of his understanding of social insight he may have read Watson's paper (19); in any event his use of Freudian terminology is interesting in the light of later studies of empathy. But another distinctive slant of Chapin's approach is the implicit idea of social skill. Skill in

social insight

(=an element of social intelligence)
ability to interpret a social situation from the other's perspective

(to detect projection, rationalisation, regression, sublimation, transference, etc., at work in the other and hence to have at hand the 'right' response to relieve tensions, etc., induced by the other through saving his or her face)

other element of social intelligence

ability to understand others;
ability to get along with others.

empathy

an ability to transpose oneself in imagination into the other's thinking, feeling other's feeling, thinking and action.

(to structure the world as the other does)

(social) insight

understanding of one's relationship with others;
(understanding self-other patterns with which a person structures his life situations and his place in them).

this context refers to that kind of manipulative conduct often associated, perhaps mistakenly, with salesmen, politicians and workers in similar interpersonal occupations whose main characteristic is influencing others. Chapin's social insight seems to be in part a social skill comparable to that exercised by accomplished diplomats.

3.24 Hogan

Hogan(20) took up, like Dymond, Mead's idea of role-taking ability. Mead held that this ability was essential for social and moral development. Empathic disposition, social sensitivity and role-taking ability are equivalent terms for Hogan(21) but his analysis is much subtler than any we have studied so far.

His argument, following Mead, goes like this. Empathy is a basic process in all social interactions and is probably substantially genetically determined in the same way as the "g" component of intellectual abilities. Putting oneself in another's place and adjusting one's conduct accordingly is an important element of moral growth. Moreover, adopting a moral point of view implies accepting

the responsibility for one's own actions so far as they may affect the welfare of others. This also implies a consciousness of what Mead called the generalised other. If empathy is the ability to adopt a moral point of view and to take into account the effect our conduct may have on others it is important to conceptualise clearly what we mean by moral conduct and moral development. In this respect Hogan follows McDougall who "explicitly linked social sensitivity, empathy and moral conduct."(22)

Moral conduct can be defined as behaviour carried out with reference to the norms, rules, and expectations that apply in a given social context...and moral development can be regarded as the process by which one comes to take these into account.(23)

Furthermore

...moral development can be conceptualised and moral conduct explained in terms of five dimensions (moral knowledge, socialisation, empathy, autonomy, and a dimension of moral judgement) ... (24)

Finally, Hogan argues that "the emergence of socialisation, empathy and autonomy represents separate stages of moral development..."(25)

3.25 Hogan and Dymond compared

Dymond and Hogan are similar in that both have a well developed theory to underpin their particular views of empathy and both take their lead from Mead's notion of role-taking ability. However, their subsequent paths diverge substantially both in the development of the concept and, predictably, in their attempts to measure it. Dymond ultimately abandoned her approach altogether but Hogan went much further along his chosen route.

In the 1963 paper(26), written under her new name with Barbara Lerner, Dymond makes no reference to role-taking ability. They explore some possible relations between three variables: patient's recognised need to change, therapist's level of experience and three characteristics of patient-therapist pairs (therapist's distancing from the patient, similarity of patient's and therapists's gender, and the therapist's empathy). Empathy is here defined as an "ability to understand the patient in his or her (i.e. the patient's) own terms". This has the flavour of the definition of empathy proposed by Carl Rogers under whose influence Dymond came and with whom she

worked in the early '50s. Moreover these authors used Kelly's Repertory Grid Technique as one of their main research instruments which meant that each patient (and therapist) had a unique self-referenced yardstick against which changes could be observed and compared. In short she has (in this paper) moved towards a personal psychology which focusses on the dynamic properties of a mental life economy. Finally, in evaluating their hypotheses they explore possible relations between the patient and his or her therapist in a manner which anticipates at least one aspect of Barrett-Lennard's cyclical model of empathy.(27) For example, they write:

Perhaps the relation between high posttherapy empathy and improvement is not the obvious one, that the therapist coming to understand his patient's own view of himself contributes to more or better therapeutic work being done. Perhaps instead of the therapist coming to understand the patient, the patient is adopting his therapist's view of him.(28)

In fact their data did not support this hypothesis but the point of interest is their suggestion of what Barrett-Lennard calls received empathy (or rather something like it). The idea that the patients are active members of a relation is very far from Dymond's earlier treatment of empathy as an ability, perhaps a component of social intelligence, an idea which her mentor Cottrell supported and encouraged her to investigate.

In his 1969 paper Hogan stated that "Internalizing social prohibitions and learning to take the moral point of view are seen as two independent stages in moral development."(29) It is possible that a person could fail to internalise his parents' value schemata yet not become delinquent. By taking a moral point of view "a person is said to consider the consequences of his actions for the welfare of others"(30), which presupposes some such notion as Mead's taking the role of the generalised other. However, he was unimpressed with both Dymond's and Chapin's attempts to measure empathy (or social insight) and so he developed an instrument of his own. Among other things he sought to compare socialisation scores (on the CPI Socialisation scale) with empathy ratings obtained on his empathy scale which, he assumed, reflected ability to take a moral point of view in everyday affairs. Hogan's results suggested that the two factors: socialisation and empathy, are independent dimensions of social behaviour. The relation between empathy and moral behaviour was more

ambiguous though his data was suggestive and encouraging. Empathic ability as measured by his scale "seems to be at least one requirement for taking the moral point of view." (31) The 1973 paper (32) describes the refinement of his scale and further develops a typology of the character structure of individuals in terms of high and low scores on the two dimensions. In the 1975 paper he draws attention to the relation between a role-theoretical perspective and "a consistent psychological (as contrasted with a sociological) viewpoint." (33) Dymond and Chapin worked within a sociological framework.

He cites two motivational assumptions underlying his quest:

...that people need (1) positive, friendly attention (and dread social disapproval; and (2) structure and order in their everyday lives. These assumptions imply that people are in some sense driven to seek social interaction, but always within a rule-governed framework. (34)

From this position he speculates about the typical empathic "actor" and empathic "audience", it being understood that interacting persons alternate between the two roles. He further argues that there are two psychic structures underlying "personality":

The first, role structure, is the set of roles or self-presentations that each of us evolves in order to interact effectively with our peers and associates in everyday life...Character structure is the residue of accommodations that each of us has made to the demands and expectations of our family and culture in childhood. (35)

The first of these structures is conscious, plastic and moulded by situational factors. The second is unconscious, stable and relatively insensitive to these factors. Hogan proposes that moral development involves three stages: compliance, in which social conduct is regulated by rules which must be obeyed, empathy, and finally autonomy. The first stage has the effect of inducing in the child an authoritarian attitude which must somehow be outgrown. Empathy is the path to moral (or at least socialized) conduct; it prevents those who show little respect for the rules (i.e. the non-conformists) from being delinquent. As Hogan puts it

...an empathic disposition facilitates a relativistic perspective that softens and humanizes a child's early authoritarian conscience. On the other hand, an empathic disposition engenders a sensitivity to the expectations of others that promotes socialized conduct and compensates for a child's lack of respect for the rules themselves. (36)

Hogan investigated the differences between four "character" types. They are presented in the table below.

		Empathy	
		Low	High
Socialisation	Low	delinquent (e.g. heroin addicts)	cavalier attitude to social conventions; mildly sociopathic; (e.g. marijuana smokers)
	High	rigid rule followers (e.g. policemen)	moral maturity; comfortable with social conventions but tolerant of transgressors (e.g. effective counsellors)

A problem which Hogan faced concerns the status of empathy. Is it a trait variable (and so genetically determined, as Mead suggested, forming the essence of social intelligence) or is it a state variable which an individual can take on, so to speak, because the situation warrants it? Whether some people are naturally more empathic than others is an important issue for any theory of empathy but answers must reflect the complexity of the phenomenon itself and the idea of a unitary ability or trait, though undoubtedly attractive, is questionable. Mental and physical intelligence have proved to be more complex than simple notions such as "g" would suggest. The state view of empathy recalls the inherently manipulative character of social skills as interpreted by the great majority of theorists in this field. It is difficult to reconcile empathy thus understood with either moral development (leading to genuine autonomy, i.e. freedom to choose one way or the other) or with authentic concern for others.(37)

Apart from MacDougall whom he cites and Stewart whom he does not Hogan is unique in the empathy literature for his exploration of its possible connection with moral conduct. It is very likely that he was unaware of the work of Stewart.

3.26 Other approaches to empathy viewed as ability

Leaving the role-taking tradition but staying within the conception of empathy as an ability we now turn to Kagan and his fellow workers

who have investigated affective sensitivity which they equate with empathy(38).

...affective sensitivity or what might be termed generically, empathy...is conceptualised as the ability to detect and describe the immediate affective state of another, or in terms of communication theory, the ability to receive and decode affective communication.(39)

Their conception of empathy is patently very different from any we have seen up to now. In fact, we are hard put to see empathy here at all if the earlier accounts serve as the baseline for comparative purposes. As to its status the Kagan group is quite unequivocal:

...affective sensitivity is a psychological trait which is measurable, that individuals have this trait in varying degrees and that this degree is subject to change through training procedures.(40)

What is new in the thinking of the Kagan team is firstly a concern with non-verbal behaviour as a source of information for interested observers of others (e.g. counsellors, therapists), and secondly, by invoking communication theory they imply that empathy is an interactive process rather than a trait or ability. Kagan and his co-workers seem not to have noticed this so not surprisingly they have not disentangled these two strands.

Discussing the behaviour of the person low in affective sensitivity they came to this conclusion:

The person low in affective sensitivity either does not accurately perceive affective states in others, or he somehow distorts them in the identification process. If the first is true, it means that the person has not learned through experience what the various cues mean. Except in a few cases this seems unlikely. More likely, he does accurately perceive the cues, but his defense mechanisms change the perception and the result is a distorted identification. The process assumes two states of perception, a sensory and an interpretive or labelling one. A strong feeling is perceived (sensed) but identified (labelled) as something milder or different.(41)

Thus affective sensitivity is an intervening variable mediating the client-counsellor relationship; it affects the response orientation of the therapist to the client. Had Kagan and his colleagues been familiar with, say, the work of Dymond they might have reconsidered both their data and the theoretical implications thereof and have concluded that, whatever the status of affective sensitivity, empathy was not at all the same thing and that an interactive model (which they had implicitly in mind when evaluating the client-counsellor relationship) may have provided a more helpful starting

point for their investigation. Nevertheless the highlighting of the importance of affective sensitivity in the interpersonal professions and its contribution to effective performance therein is a valuable contribution. The T-group technique of sensitivity training owes its appeal to the relationship between effective interpersonal functioning and affective sensitivity.

One final contribution to the view of empathy as ability introduces the idea of prediction. Kerr and Speroff assert that:

...the ability to put yourself in the other person's position, establish rapport, and anticipate his reactions, feelings, and behaviours...is recognizable as empathy except that the past accepted definitions of empathy seem somewhat inadequate since they stress mere identity of feeling and omit the practical element of prediction of the other's behaviour.(42)

On the subject of prediction they are technically right; definitions of empathy did not include reference to anticipating the "reactions, feelings, and behaviours" of others. On the other hand the measuring instruments devised by Dymond and many other workers in this field attempted to measure what has since come to be called predictive empathy. For example, empathy was assumed to exist if a person guessed correctly how another would rate him or herself on a set of personality scales, a procedure used by Dymond. The critical evaluation of this and other practices by Cronbach(43) among others virtually brought empathy research to a halt for a time.

Kerr and Speroff extended the boundaries of the practical importance of empathy by relating it to performance in non-counselling fields. They cite, for example, "natural" leaders, salesmen, management and labour leaders as instances and in the case of all but the first refer to similar research reports by other investigators.

However, unlike the other researchers mentioned in this section, all of whom developed and evaluated instruments for measuring "empathy" (as uniquely defined and labelled in each case) Kerr and Speroff designed a procedure which in effect refers to a generalised rather than a particular other. This distinction between the particular and the generalised other is central to the idea of trait or ability but further confusion accrues in the case of empathy because as a con-

cept it is interpreted either as referring to the perception of specific individuals or as a mental image of a representative of a class of individuals. As Gage and Cronbach put it:

A generalized trait such as "empathic ability" may profitably be used as a construct if changes in the individual's behaviour from situation to situation are small compared to differences between individuals in the same situation.(44)

Every individual is a member of many classes of which he or she may be regarded, perhaps mistakenly, as typical. For example, the other may be female, middle-aged, shabbily dressed, blue-eyed, dark-skinned, a professional person and have a cockney accent. Each of these traits marks her as a representative of the classes of individuals possessing these traits. An individual's empathic ability (however conceptualised and measured) must refer either to that person's competence in dealing with a particular person or with the general type which, in the empathiser's view, possibly held unconsciously, the other represents. Suppose now that a therapist's score on some scale of empathy is consistent across a range of patients. Does this mean that the therapist is demonstrating a consistent trait (compared with other therapists; for example, who may be "better" or "worse" than he or she is) or does it mean that the therapist has somehow lumped all or many of his or her patients into a class, e.g. the kind of person who consults psychotherapists?

Before concluding this section, which is concentrating on empathy viewed as an ability, that is, as a property or quality of persons, let us briefly look at another trait which lies within the field of person perception. This is best described as the ability to judge people. Although this is not to be equated with empathy it is held to be, in some respects, similar to it. Bender and Hastorf, for example, claim that: "In everyday situations we depend necessarily on our capacity to perceive and predict the behaviour, thoughts and feelings of the other person".(45) They argue that such an ability is basic to the socialisation process; referring to Cantril(46) they later add that "it would be very helpful to have a measure of this "capacity to perceive and be aware of the purpose" of other persons"(47), a task to which they address themselves in their paper. Bronfenbrenner quotes Taft(48) who examined the question as to whether there is a general trait to judge others:

The ability to judge others has been considered as a personality trait...The contradictions found between the studies may be due partly to the low reliability of the measures used, and partly to the effect of specific factors...This problem of specificity arises with all traits, but it seems to be particularly marked in the case of the ability to judge others; nevertheless there does seem to be sufficient generality to this ability to justify describing at least some judges as "good" or "poor".(49)

Bronfenbrenner then examines the problems attending the measurement of predictive accuracy, having first distinguished sensitivity to the generalised other from sensitivity to individual differences or what he calls interpersonal sensitivity. Thus we meet again the possibility that empathic ability is not a unitary phenomenon. Bronfenbrenner, however, develops his arguments in terms of skills in social perception. Empathy viewed as a social skill is our next main theme.

3.3 EMPATHY AS SKILL

In order to carry out any action whatsoever an agent must call on resources which make its fulfilment possible. These fall into two different but mutually supportive classes: cognitive processes in which intentions are formulated or clarified and possible means selected for their competent achievement; and productive processes with which agents convert capacities into coordinated action sequences. Skill may be defined as the achievement of a desired goal to a specified set of criteria and with the minimum expenditure of time and effort. Skilled performance is thus a special kind of action sequence in which both cognitive and productive resources optimally interact and create a particular degree of coordination. Cognitive and productive resources are often called abilities or capacities or competencies; they empower and guide action. The notion of competence on the other hand is linked to the quality of performance so that high or low level of skill is equated with a high or low level of availability of the necessary resources. There is thus a dependency relation in every skill between degree of competence and the abilities or capacities of performers to carry them out. This relation hinges on the availability of both cognitive and productive competencies.

To think through and solve a problem requires an ability or capacity to engage in that kind of activity called problem-solving. Competent problem-solving depends on a set of cognitive and productive resources: discrimination, analysis, inference, evaluation, divergent thinking, etc., any or all of which may be wholly or partly a function of natural endowment or of acquisition through experience, or some combination of the two. In either case maturation may play a major part as the work of Piaget and his fellow researchers has shown. Thus we may view the trait or ability approach to empathy as concerned with the resource end of action. However, the idea of skill is never far away as we saw in Chapin's view of social insight. Here the emphasis is on the coordinated action sequences but with an implicit expectation of high level performance. Obviously it is but a short step to the idea of degrees of competence (Taft's "good" or "poor" judges, for instance), which may or may not be related to degrees of inherited or acquired capacity, or maturation. Chapin's reference to "...a humorous remark to relax a dangerous intensity, a suggested compromise to attain temporary agreement, a face-saving remark to avoid embarrassment..." clearly implies that range of skills familiar to accomplished politicians, diplomats, negotiators, chairpersons, and the like. Presumably Chapin and others concerned with social skills feel that "diplomacy" is essential for successfully coping with difficult social situations. Chapin's illustrations point to an unfortunate orientation which is typical of the social skills approach to empathy (and to interpersonal relations generally). Implicit in their thinking is the idea that social life is a kind of game in which the "players" try to score points off one another or to defend themselves against such tactics. Success in social affairs from this point of view depends on knowing when to attack and when to defend and when to do nothing while nevertheless keeping the other in play. Moreover, it is believed that the finest players can judge with an unbelievable subtlety how far to press their attack or defence so as to maintain from moment to moment a state of dynamic equilibrium that sustains a regime of pregnant possibilities without at the same time straining relations with others who are viewed as in some way essential for advancing one's own position. The classic model for this manipulative conduct

is the professional diplomat. On this ground alone a social skills model of empathy is untenable as I have tried to show in my discussion of the antithesis between the power relation and empathy.

The idea of skill (i.e. that particular coordinated set of action-sequences which a performer musters in order to achieve a specified goal with the minimum expenditure of time and effort) is implicit in much of the thinking of those who have espoused the ability approach to empathy; examples include Dymond's (Mead's) role-taking theory, Kagan's theory of affective communication, and Bronfenbrenner's theory of social perception.

3.31 Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner and his colleagues distinguished two types of ability in social perception: sensitivity to the generalised other (a concept they borrowed from Mead) and sensitivity to individual differences or what they called interpersonal sensitivity. "It is altogether possible," they say, "for a person to excel in one of these skills but not the other." (50) They lay no foundations for their assertion that empathic ability (social sensitivity) is a skill which, considering that the literature they review concentrates for the most part on the idea of ability (though probably not explicitly understood as resource or capacity), is strange. However, this team had been concerned with the development of skill in social perception (i.e. the perception of persons) and in so doing had followed an already established tradition. (51) Cottrell (52) had already set the scene by indicating the main issues: is empathy a general or a specific skill? What are its determinants? What are its social consequences? Can it be developed? Presumably the trend of enquiries into the nature of social perception thereafter accepted the basic idea that it was a skill in the same way as object perception was so regarded, or, to be more accurate, that it consisted of a number of interdependent skills.

Bronfenbrenner and his associates bring to the fore in their paper a well-known human characteristic: a tendency to make judgements about classes of people in the conviction that they are true or typical of all members of that class. Thus a person may generalise about work-

ing-class mothers, D-stream students in a comprehensive school, punk and funk, British Rail workers, and so on. We freely make statements about politicians, local councillors, the unemployed, the poor, foreigners, policemen, drug addicts, and many other "types" of people. One of the questions which Bronfenbrenner's group addresses is: do some judges sense the unique characteristics of a group or class more accurately than others? Putting the question like this raises a whole cluster of problems: what counts as a class? Do individuals vary in their discriminability (i.e. do they vary in their "category width" for classes of people)? What are people sensitive to? How are the characteristics which define the class arrived at? These and similar questions point to the futility of invoking empathy as an explanatory device in order to account for "facts" such as the successful prediction of a ballot, or being able to sense the views of members about the leadership of their trades union by asking one or two of them. However much we may empathise with individual members of a class the extrapolation from these individual experiences to a general assessment of the class to which we have allotted them (i.e. to which we believe they belong) is automatically to discount those properties which uniquely mark each individual as the person he or she is (and which, in Bronfenbrenner's terms, depends on interpersonal sensitivity). Thus he and his co-workers are certainly right to say that two distinctly different skills are involved because different processes are involved. If empathy refers to interpersonal sensitivity it cannot also refer to sensitivity to the generalised other. Thus it seems to me that Bronfenbrenner must not only justify the notion of this second type of sensitivity and show how it is related to the human inclination towards stereotypy; he must also demonstrate what is the relationship between the two sensitivities.

Bronfenbrenner and his team in their 12-fold classification (see Table 1) summarise their efforts to deal with these tasks but they never question the "reality" of the various generalised others they introduce. The fictional nature of generalised others, however conceptually and functionally real they may appear to be in everyday use, the authors do not discuss at all. People can so easily persuade themselves that esprit de corps, stupid students, unfeeling bosses, and the like are "real" but one might have expected psycholog-

Table 1.

SOCIAL OBJECT (with presumed require- site abilities)	REFERENT			
	Non-personal Sensitivity	First-person Sensitivity	Second-person Sensitivity	Third-person Sensitivity
Generalized Other (1) Sensitivity to the gen- eralized other	How does the com- munity feel about "re- leased time" for reli- gious education?	Is my stock rising in this community?	Do the teachers think they are doing a good job?	Whom will the city elect to the School Board this fall to re- place Mr. Jones?
Face-to-Face Group (1) Sensitivity to the gen- eralized other (2) Sensitivity to group differences	What tax rate will the board approve for next year?	Was I too informal in my talk at the PTA last night?	Does the Student Council have any con- fidence in its own abil- ities?	Will our team be able to win the county championship?
Particular Other (1) Sensitivity to the gen- eralized other (2) Sensitivity to group differences (3) Sensitivity to individ- ual differences (inter- personal sensitivity)	How much does the new school principal know about problems of school financing?	What will my wife think of me when I tell her I have to go out again tonight?	Is Miss Smith getting close to another nerv- ous breakdown?	What does the Presi- dent of the School Board think of the new principal?

A Schematic Representation of Different Forms of Social Sensitivity (with hypothetical illustrations from the life
of a school superintendent)

ists to look rather more closely at this phenomenon especially when they are proposing techniques for measuring it. Their table shows how they construe social sensitivity. The two types already mentioned (sensitivity to the generalised other and sensitivity to individual differences) form the poles of one of the dimensions: the social object. The other dimension is the referent: the kinds of sensitivity involved.

The virtue of their analysis is that it clearly demonstrates the non-unitary character of social sensitivity (only one aspect of which, interpersonal sensitivity, can be likened to empathy) and provides a framework for further research and conceptual analysis.

3.32 Argyle

Another worker in the skills tradition is Argyle who, rarely and then only briefly, refers to empathy; nevertheless he has over many years concerned himself with social competence in which empathy-like properties seem to have their place. For example, he examines the components of social competence: perceptual sensitivity (perceptions of other's behaviour and expressiveness), warmth and rapport, a wide range of social techniques, a degree of flexibility, energy, and smooth response patterns.(53) The first two are aspects of empathy as interpreted by some other workers; perceptual sensitivity may be construed as an element of Bronfenbrenner's social sensitivity (a necessary pre-requisite), while warmth and rapport are both claimed by Rogers and his followers as essential for any creative and supportive interpersonal relationship.(54) The other components are not invariably related to empathy.

The interest of Argyle's approach is his use of a model based on psychomotor skills(55) for conducting his analysis of interpersonal behaviour. This not only introduces an apparently rigorous operational model of empathy but also provides a set of ready-made concepts for interpreting social behaviour whether empathic or not. One major consequence of the skills approach is the prospect of training people to develop their social skills. Argyle in particular has made his name in this area with practical applications in the training of

managers, interviewers, teachers, salesmen, nurses, negotiators, and others in the interpersonal professions.

3.33 The clinical setting

The implicit assumption that skill is involved in empathic understanding appears to permeate much of the counselling literature in both clinical and non-clinical fields. Few of the workers actually refer to skill yet it is difficult to see how individual differences are to be explained solely on the basis of differences in empathic ability (capacity). The fact that many workers have used instruments such as Carkhuff's Scale of Empathic Understanding or the Truax Scale of Accurate Empathy to evaluate counsellor/therapist performance suggests a wide-spread belief that variability in competent performance is related to a (usually unspecified) set of sub-skills. Furthermore, the gist of much of this literature is that, whatever empathy may be, it can be learned and improved by training and supervised practice. One example from a non-clinical context illustrates this point. Aspy and Roebuck(56) investigated teachers' skills in understanding their students' perceptions of their own experiences using a scale developed by Aspy(57) on the Truax and Carkhuff model. (58) Voice quality, language, communication skills, discrimination skills, etc., are the elements to be rated by judges.

Performance on this revised empathy scale served as a basis for comparing high and low scorers in terms of their ratings on Flanders Interaction Analysis.(59) This instrument is designed to measure, in effect, the student- or teacher-centredness of teachers, i.e. it provides an indirect measure of the teacher's concern for, and consideration of, the student as a person whose feelings, points of view, interests, and so forth merit attention in the teacher-student relationship. High scorers on the Aspy Empathy Scale were significantly more student-centred (more inclined to accept students' feelings, gave more encouragement, criticised less, experienced more student-initiated activity, had fewer instances of silence or confusion) during their lessons, than low scorers. Although the authors do not say that, since empathy and at least one aspect of classroom life are related, it is therefore a good thing they do say that

their results "are consistent with the hypothesis that the teacher's provision of high levels of Understanding of Meaning to the student (=empathy as measured by Aspy) is a critical factor in increasing student involvement." (60) Since this last is viewed as a "good thing" by many psychologists and educationists the implicit suggestion is that we need empathic teachers. It is a central tenet of all who follow in the wake of Truax and Carkhuff that empathy (as understood among this group) can be learned and that training programmes can be and have been used extensively in many contexts. In fact the bulk of the literature in what I have called the social skills approach to empathy is concerned with the design and evaluation of such training programmes though not all inspired by Truax or Carkhuff.

Similar arguments apply in the case of psychotherapy. Egan (61) is one of the few exceptions among psychotherapists who specifically adopts a skills approach. Carkhuff and his associates are, if anything, even more enthusiastic supporters of the skills approach to therapy as we shall see in a moment. However, the relation between the concept of empathy and the concept of social skill cannot be said to have been worked out by any of the exponents of social skills. Most have shown the need for a conceptual framework within which to develop a practical approach to learning and teaching social skills but the empathic relation does not feature much in their theoretical apparatus.

3.34 Carkhuff

In his early Rogerian days Carkhuff had already expressed dissatisfaction with the outcome of much psychotherapy regardless of the theoretical origins of individual therapies. Citing Rogers et al. (62) and Truax and Carkhuff (63), Carkhuff refers to evidence that "professional counselling and psychotherapy may be "for better or for worse"." (64) This led him and his associates to move away from the earlier assumptions about the relationships between helper skills and helpee outcomes and towards a more sophisticated skills-based model.

It is interesting to trace the evolution of this model for the light it throws on the view of empathy held by his group. Rogers hypothes-

ised that the helper's empathy (E) inspired the client's progress towards therapeutic personality change (TPC). He later added unconditional positive regard (UPR), a kind of non-critical permissiveness, and congruence (Cg), a "responsive genuineness" which, as we shall see later, formed part of "the necessary and sufficient conditions for therapeutic personality change".

During this early period a number of Rogers' followers (especially Carkhuff and Truax) developed measures of these variables (and some others) and added measures of the client's own perceptions of his or her therapeutic experiences (Ex). Armed with these instruments they investigated the relationship between the three sets of variables. By the mid-60s the relationship between the variables could be summarised as follows:

Helper Skills	Helping Process	Helpee Outcome
E + UPR + Cg	Ex	TPC

Thus the outcome of therapy was thought to be largely a function of helper competence and so could indeed be for better or for worse. This discovery seems to have been the turning point for Carkhuff. He directed his attention more closely to helper skills isolating a number of new ones such as helper self-disclosure, concreteness or specificity of expression, confrontation, and immediacy of experience.

Towards the end of the '60s Carkhuff refined empathy (which now became accurate empathy) and defined it operationally

...in terms of the helper's ability to make responses that were interchangeable with the feeling and the meaning expressed by the helpee. Unconditional positive regard was expanded to emphasize respect which allowed for unconditional regard at the lowest level and differential regard at the highest level. Also, congruence was modified to emphasize externalised genuineness rather than an internalised convergence of experiencing and behaviour.(65)

Computing the variance of scores on the measures used and also by factor analysing his data Carkhuff isolated two main helper factors: responsiveness (R), which subsumed empathy, and respect (the former accounting for most of the variance of the latter); and initiative (I) which incorporated confrontation and immediacy of experience. Finally, genuineness and concreteness loaded on both responsiveness

and initiative. Thus $E + UPR + Cg$ first expanded into a much longer expression and then contracted to just two terms: $R + I$.

However, Carkhuff also found that preliminary and transitional skills were needed, the former consisting of attending skills (A), which therefore preceded R, and the latter consisting of personalising skills (P). The helper skills now had the form $A + R + P + I$; empathy lies buried as one element of responsiveness.

At the same time the orientation to therapy took a new turn; the helpee was now viewed from the perspective of human resource development (HRD) rather than the TPC of Rogers. People must be helped to become what they are capable of becoming if only competent helpers are available to aid this process. The dimensions of development are physical, emotional, and intellectual ($Ph + E + Int$) which applied also to the helpers and which determines the criteria for selecting and training them.

The helping process, too, began to look more complex. The original notion of the helpee's exploration was felt to be inadequate. There has to be action (Act) but effective action. Therefore there must also be understanding (U) of the helpee's own world. So by the early '70s the basic model had become:

Helper Skills	Helping Process	Helpee Outcome
$A + R + P + I$	$Ex + U + Act$	$HDR(E + Ph + Int)$

This is not merely a skills model; it is a schema for designing training programmes for helpers and helpees alike. It forms the basis of the Carkhuff approach to human resource development in whatever field of practical application one may choose: teaching, nursing, management, industrial relations. Empathy as a process has become an element in a set of interpersonal skills. Whilst we cannot argue with Carkhuff's general belief that whatever can be done can be done well or badly and that in interpersonal relations we cannot afford (and perhaps from a moral point of view cannot allow) helpers to perform badly and that training is an obvious cure for bad performance, we may yet wonder what has happened to the fundamental quality of all creative human associations: unconditional and spon-

taneous love, which alone can initiate that bond between persons that leads to personal growth. As with all skills models there is the ever present danger of the "expert" dominating the helpee and creating an ideology of personal development rather than fostering a community of persons; of building a divisive relation rather than an empathic one.

It is somewhat chilling to discover that the Carkhuff approach has acquired the dubious soubriquet of Militant Humanism. Has expertise become an ideological substitute for interpersonal sensitivity?

3.4 EMPATHY AS A ROUTE TO PERSONAL BEING

3.41 Carl Rogers

The idea that empathy is best understood as a process which leads to genuine personal growth (as distinct from mere acquisition of skills) begins with Rogers(66). In his original paper(67) Rogers outlined the theoretical foundations of his practice of client-centered therapy. His fundamental theory of therapy suggested that if certain conditions prevailed then a certain therapy process could get under way which in turn became the if-clause for a set of outcomes in personality change. From this central theory he evolved other theories, e.g. a theory of personality, of the fully functioning person, of interpersonal relationships; and various theories of application: family life, education and learning, group leadership, and group tension and conflict. Though speculative and tentative, Rogers' first account is imaginative, suggestive, and laid the foundation of a school of therapy which has had repercussions far beyond the boundaries of psychotherapy and has formed a major plank in the fabric of humanistic psychology. The later paper concentrates on the sufficient and necessary conditions for therapeutic personality change, of which there are six. The first lays down the minimal character of the relationship: that "two people are to some degree in contact, that each makes some perceived difference in the experiential field of the other".(68) Thus does he construe the psychological contract between the two persons. The remaining conditions

"define the characteristics of the relationship which are regarded as essential to defining the characteristics of each person in the relationship".(69) Two of these involve empathy:

5. The therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavours to communicate this experience to the client.
6. The communication to the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional positive regard is to a minimal extent achieved.(70)

Unconditional positive regard is the subject of condition 4. For Rogers empathy is "to sense the client's private world as if it were your own but without ever losing the "as if" quality".(71)

Two points need to be made. Empathic understanding stands in contrast to intellectual or analytical understanding. Empathy is not an analytical process. Secondly, it is to be assumed that only certain essential features of the client's private world will interest the empathiser though these may vary from one therapeutic situation to another. That the emphasis is on the person rather than on abilities or skills is suggested by the fact that the five conditions after the first are qualities of a relationship (exemplified by the first condition) even though they are expressed in terms of characteristics of the participants. This becomes even clearer when he refers to the central role of experience:

Conditions 3, 4, and 5 which apply especially to the therapist, are qualities of experience, not intellectual information. If they are to be acquired, they must, in my opinion, be acquired through experiential training.(72)

Rogers talks of moving about freely in the world of the other, and living and sensing the client's experience and ultimately communicating its meaning to the client, a meaning of which the client may have been unaware. Thus empathy is one aspect of a state of being centred on the client-therapist relationship; to acquire this state of being involves at least the opportunity to "tune into" one's experience of the relationship, perhaps in terms of the characteristics set out in conditions 3, 4 and 5. This approach is reminiscent of the phenomenological viewpoint which will be considered in the next section but here it is worth noting that Rogers is describing an asymmetrical relationship. Of course this follows from his choice of topic; it is the *patient's* personality that is assumed to be in

need of change. However, even if this is a reasonable aim of therapy it is nevertheless quite feasible to consider the patient's empathy with the therapist, or better still, to think of empathy as the process whereby the two get to know and understand one another by exploring each other's world with positive gain for both of them, though arguably more for the client who sought therapy in the first place. Asymmetrical relationships abound in typical interactive systems: warder-prisoner, doctor-patient, teacher-student, manager-subordinate, clergy-laity, to name some obvious examples. Note that while asymmetrical relationships centre on a dominance relation they do not have to involve a power relation. Teacher-student, parent-child are common instances of dominance relations which nevertheless leave open the possibility that empathy rather than power may prevail.

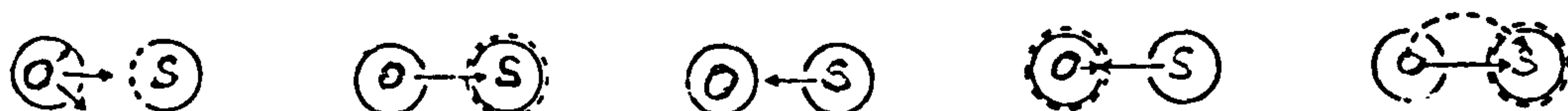
There is nothing unethical about an imbalance in interpersonal relations unless manipulation, exploitation or oppression is the source or outcome of the asymmetry. Teachers, for example, usually have knowledge and skills which their students lack and want; patients consult and trust their doctors to the extent that they believe that they can cure them. Similarly, managers and administrators may scan a wider horizon than subordinates for judging the value of decisions they impose on others. Even so the acceptance of asymmetry in a relationship has to be justified and not merely taken for granted as a feature of a hypothesised natural order. Few nowadays would question that children, even those as yet unborn, have rights as much as their parents; women and wives as much as men and husbands. All merit respect (at least) and unconditional recognition and acceptance. Even if children (or adults) make mistakes, as they assuredly will, their correction should be carried out with the same unconditional regard and respect; that is to say, correction does not imply or call for apportionment of blame or denigration of their personhoods. Rogers would doubtless agree and many would say that client-centred therapy is grounded in such attitudes. And so it is. Nevertheless the theoretical arguments of his 1957 and 1959 papers do not overtly recognise that patients may empathise with their therapists and perhaps should be encouraged to do so. In fact some

therapists point out that, at least in some states of mental disorder, empathy is impossible by virtue of the patient's condition. Schizophrenia and psychopathy are much quoted examples. Even so, the possibility that *both* partners in the relationship (be it counselling, therapeutic or just conversational) might enjoy and develop an empathic understanding of each other should be explored without prejudice, regardless of current practice and ideology.

3.42 Barrett-Lennard

The first person to do this systematically appears to be Stewart(73) but, although he is firmly in the tradition of the quest for the development of personal being, I examine his contribution to our understanding of empathy in the next section. Here let us look briefly at some of Rogers' followers. Barrett-Lennard(74) and Halkides(75), both doctoral students at the University of Chicago (where Rogers taught at the time), were the first to attempt to test his theory; they operationalised the therapy process(76) though in quite different ways.

Barrett-Lennard departs significantly from all previous approaches to the study of the therapeutic process when he asserts that "*the client's experience of his therapist's response is the primary locus of therapeutic influence in their relationship*".(77) The client is most affected by his or her own perceptions of the experienced relationship and therefore these perceptions "will be the most crucially related to the outcome of therapy".(78) Although Barrett-Lennard does not say so and may have been unaware of the possibility at this time it seems clear that if empathy (i.e. empathic understanding) "is concerned with experiencing the process or content of another's awareness in all its aspects"(79) then clients must presumably gain their impressions of how the therapist sees them (i.e. is experiencing them) through the same process of empathic understanding. His later work, however, does incorporate this idea. In his 1981 paper (80) he develops a cyclical model of empathy which describes how two people may enter into an empathic relationship.



S has empathic set; O is expressing him or herself	S resonates to O's expressiveness	S expresses empathy	O receives empathy	O's fresh expression and S's resonance; O's feedback
(Conditions for empathic process)	(Phase 1 empathy)	(Phase 2 empathy)	(Phase 3 empathy)	(Repeat of Phase 1)

Diagram 3. Schematic outline of the empathic cycle. Dotted circles mark peaks of impact/arousal/involvement in hearing or being heard empathically; solid lines represent principal communicative expression; dotted arc refers to feedback or follow-through communication.

In the first step the empathiser is attending to the other "with an empathic set"; the other is expressing his or her own experience at this moment and "expecting, hoping or trusting" that the empathiser is receptive. In this preliminary stage both participants are actively engaged in the relationship but only one is in an empathic frame of mind. (This may be compared with my one-sided empathic relation and the predisposing and necessary condition of non-manipulative openness towards the other for the relation to develop at all.) (81) Step 2, the first phase of empathy, finds the empathiser reading the other's expressiveness (in both its direct and indirect forms) and resonating to the other's experience so that it becomes "experientially alive, vivid and known" to the empathiser. This step is similar to my stage 1 in which the empathiser spontaneously experiences the other's givenness. (82) In step 3, the second phase of empathy, the empathiser somehow expresses the fact that he or she has grasped something of the other's experiencing. Step 4 finds the other experiencing the empathiser's receptiveness and may feel the extent to which the empathiser understands him or her here and now. This is phase 3 empathy. There is no equivalent to steps 3 and 4 in my account since I have argued that the experience of givenness is but a necessary first step towards deliberate identification with the other. It is at this stage in my theory that clarification of differences may lead to understanding, an understanding which may be shared. Step 4 in Barrett-Lennard's model is in fact a step 1 for the other in which the other is resonating to the empathiser's empathic attitude. He is here confusing two different situations: the

one-sided relation with which he began and the mutual case. Obviously the second may grow out of the first but then there must be intermediate stages covering the transition which he does not discuss. Alternatively, if we construe the one-sided relation as, in fact, one of mutual empathy then presumably his first stage would be different.

Step 5 is a combination of a repeat of step 1 and feedback, the latter taking two forms: the confirming or corrective feedback through which the empathiser discovers the accuracy of his or her understanding of the other's experiencing; and the informative feedback through which the empathiser appreciates the other's perception of the burgeoning (empathic) relation.

In summary

Phase 1, *empathic resonance*, refers to "the inner process of empathic listening, resonance and personal understanding";

Phase 2, *expressed empathy*, centres on "communication or (more accurately) expressed empathic understanding";

Phase 3 focusses on "*received empathy*, or empathy based on the experience of the person empathised with".(83)

Barrett-Lennard's paper is concerned as much as anything with clarifying the complexity of empathy and showing that therefore different instruments and different methods will be necessary for evaluating "empathy" according to the phase under study. I am not concerned with the evaluation of empathy, only with its description. Barrett-Lennard's contribution is interesting in that he develops an interactive model which allows for the possibility of mutual empathy emerging and perhaps prospering. In fact he did not consider this possibility; had he done so he would surely have become aware of the inconsistency his steps 3 and 4 introduce into his theory. Another important element in his analysis (at least from my point of view) is his constant reference to *personal* understanding of the other as the essential outcome of the empathic process. Earlier in the 1981 paper in commenting on Lipps' view of empathy he writes:

Implied is an apprehension of personal qualities or individuality of the other, not from a detached external view but from a position as participant-observer. Not yet explicit, however, was the idea of knowing through entering into the lived worlds of others, with felt awareness of their experience.(84)

Had he taken up this notion of personal knowing and understanding and explored how participants might get to know one another as persons he might well have reconsidered the Rogerian emphasis on entering other people's worlds and developed a different model, perhaps one more like Stewart's or my own.

Another of Barrett-Lennard's innovations was to analyse the concept of empathic understanding which he saw as

...an active process of desiring to know the full present and changing awareness of another person, of reaching out to receive his communication and meaning, and of translating his words and signs into experienced meaning that matches at least those aspects of his awareness that are most important to him at the moment. It is an experiencing of the consciousness "behind" another's outward communication, but with continuous awareness that the consciousness is originating and proceeding in the other.(85)

There are thus two distinct elements. *Empathic recognition* refers to the "experiential recognition of perceptions and feelings that the other has directly symbolised and communicated"; *empathic inference* refers to the "aspect of sensing or inferring the implied or directly expressed content of the other's awareness".(86)

Finally, Barrett-Lennard moves tentatively towards a genetic theory of empathy when he links A's empathic understanding of B with (i) A's ability to discriminate and (ii) A's ability to allow in his or her total awareness all that B experiences as directly or indirectly conveyed by B's expressiveness. This in turn implies a non-defensive and personally integrated A. As Barrett-Lennard puts it (negatively):

To the extent that A identifies with B's feelings, or unconsciously projects feelings of his own into his perception of B's experiences, or in any other way confuses B's experiences with experiences which originate in himself, his empathic understanding of B will be reduced.(87)

The processes of identification, projection, and other ego defence mechanisms have an ambiguous standing in accounts of empathy; nevertheless here we see how empathy may grow out of one person's non-critical, non-judgemental acceptance of another, through the twin processes of recognition and inference.

Other disciples in the Rogerian tradition are Truax and Carkhuff and their many co-workers(88); they have designed measuring instruments

and methods, and have developed research techniques for investigating empathy especially in relation to the outcome of therapy, based on Rogers' 1957 paper. As we have seen they too have operationalised Rogers' effective therapy though in different ways. We have also seen how this group has charted a new and idiosyncratic path as a result of their dissatisfaction with the poor quality of all forms of therapy including client-centred therapy.

3.5 THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.51 Edith Stein

I shall take Edith Stein's "On the Problem of Empathy" as representative of this point of view. Following Husserl (whose student and later assistant she was) she adopted the phenomenological reduction in which the pure description of a phenomenon in consciousness is sought divorced from all knowledge, experience, and even essence which an investigator might bring to the enquiry. Until one has reached the limits of pure description of a phenomenal object, she asks, how can one grasp its essence, that is, look into the phenomenon and its tendencies and discover what the phenomenon itself actually is? It is in this spirit that Edith Stein explores the nature of empathy. Whilst we may be deceived as to the knowledge of "foreign psychic life" we cannot doubt the phenomenon itself. The task she sets herself is to explore the nature of the givenness and grasping of foreign mental life. These acts she calls empathy. She examines similarities and differences between acts of empathy and those of memory, expectation and fancy (fantasy). The last three are analogous to the first.

...in all the cases of the representation of experiences considered there are three grades or modalities of accomplishment even if in a concrete case people do not always go through all grades but are often satisfied with one of the lower ones.

These are

- (1) the emergence of the experience,
- (2) the fulfilling explication, and
- (3) the comprehensive objectification of the explained experience. (89)

In (1) I grasp the other's joy or sadness directly ("it faces me as an object"); in (2) I explore its tendencies and am drawn into the

other's experience as though in the other's place. In this way I explore the other's experience and clarify it. Finally in (3) I am able to face once again the other's joy or sadness as an object (as I did in (1)) but now clarified and possibly explained and understood.

The essential difference between empathy and the analogous acts of memory, expectation and fantasy is that in the latter the "I" of the experiences (e.g. the "I" remembering and the "I" remembered) is the same in both; in empathy the empathising "I" and the "I" whose experience is grasped in empathy are different. In stages (1) and (3) "the representation exhibits the non-primordial parallel to perception", i.e. I do not confuse my grasping of the other's experience with his; stage (2) "exhibits the non-primordial parallel to the having of the experience", i.e. I do not confuse my experience with the other's. (90)

Empathy for Edith Stein is like an "act of perception *sui generis*". Let I_o and I_s represent the "I" of other and self respectively and \underline{X} and \underline{Y} their experiences of an event Z in which, say, they experience feelings of joy. Then $I_o\underline{X}Z$ means: the other experiences joy (attributable to event Z) and $I_s\underline{Y}Z$ stands for the similar response of self to the same event. The underlined letters thus represent a relation between two entities, in this case between a human subject and a phenomenal object, an event. I will not pursue the difficulties implicit in the expression "the same event" but will assume that Z is definable objectively in ways acceptable to participants and independent observers alike. Thus we have: I_o 's primordial joy over Z , $I_o\underline{X}Z$, and I_s 's joy over Z , $I_s\underline{Y}Z$.

Now let us assume that self sees the other in a joyful frame of mind but is ignorant of event Z . In empathy I_s grasps the joyful other primordially: $I_s\underline{G}(I_o\underline{X}Z)$, i.e. $(I_o\underline{X}Z)$ is the object whose givenness is grasped. The other's joy over event Z , $\underline{X}Z$, is grasped non-primordially. If now we represent I_s 's joy over the other's experience we get $I_s\underline{Y}(I_o\underline{X}Z)$. Here \underline{Y} has its source in $(I_o\underline{X}Z)$, not Z , the event which made I_o joyful. We may make a further contrast; suppose I_s reflected (\underline{R}) on his or her empathic grasping of I_o 's joy. We would

write $IsR(IsG(IoXZ))$. The primordial experience of the reflecting self is his or her recollected experience, the act of empathy ($IsG(IoXZ)$). Both Io , the joyful other, and XZ , the other's experience of joy are non-primordial. It is worth noting that Z , the occasion of the original experience for Io , is of no consequence to Is as far as the act of empathy or its recollection is concerned. It is interesting to gather together in tabular form a number of hypothetical experiences of the participants:

Other's primordial joy over Z	$IoXZ$
Self's " " " "	$IsYZ$
" empathy with the other	$IsG(IoXZ)$
Other's " " " self	$IoG(IsYZ)$
Self's primordial joy over other's joy	$IsY(IoXZ)$
" " " " own "	$IsY(IsYZ)$
" recollection of own empathy	$IsR(IsG(IoXZ))$
" empathising with other's empathy with self	$IsG(IoG(IsYZ))$

Is , Io can be interpreted variously as: "is existentially in", "is living in", "is directly aware of", and similar expressions. We may thus say that in empathy Is experiences the joyful other ($IoXZ$) primordially, i.e. the experience is a direct, here-and-now event for Is , but "is living in" the other's joy non-primordially. In recollection Is may experience his or her own act of empathy ($IsG(IoXZ)$) primordially (i.e. the recollection is a here-and-now experience), but the other's experience of joy non-primordially. Edith Stein implies a clear separateness between the "perceptual" act and the experiencing of the two "I"s in empathy. Moreover empathy for her is a cognitive event not an emotional one. It corresponds to Scheler's *Nachgefuehl* or reproduced feeling:

In reproduced feeling we sense the *quality* of the other's feeling, without it being transmitted to us, or evoking a similar real emotion in us.(91)

Empathy "as the experience of foreign consciousness can only be the non-primordial experience which announces a primordial one".(92) My non-primordial empathic experience announces the other's primordial joy. If my emotions do correspond to those of the other, even if my empathy also persists, then my joy is a primordial act, a fellow-feeling with the other. It is this which Stein designates sympathy and thus neatly contrasts it with empathy (as she understands it).

This differs from Scheler's view of sympathy; it more closely resembles his "community of feeling".(93)

Another feature of empathy is the experience of oneness which others have claimed as characteristic. Stein makes an important distinction between two senses in which this unity of persons may be construed. Lipps held that in certain conditions the subjects of an empathic experience lose their separateness. For example, the spectator is at one with the acrobat because the former innerly experiences the latter's movements. However, Lipps fails to draw a distinction between the spectator's non-primordial "sensing" of the acrobat's movements and the latter's primordial actions. As always in empathy the spectator experiences the acrobat's performance primordially but the acrobat's feelings non-primordially (which, to the acrobat, are primordial). Following the earlier symbolism we may write I_a , I_s to represent the I's of the acrobat and spectator respectively; \underline{E} and \underline{F} their separate experiences (perceptions) of the acrobat's movements (M) during his performance; and \underline{U} , \underline{V} the feelings aroused in I_a , I_s by their experiences. We thus get a series of expressions such as:

the acrobat's experience of his movements:	$I_a \underline{E} M$
" spectator's " " these " :	$I_s \underline{F} M$
" acrobat's feelings about this experience:	$I_a \underline{U} (I_a \underline{E} M)$
" spectator's " " " " :	$I_s \underline{V} (I_s \underline{F} M)$
" " empathy with the acrobat:	$I_s \underline{G} (I_a \underline{E} M)$ or $I_s \underline{G} (I_a \underline{U} (I_a \underline{E} M))$

The last line has two expressions according to whether I_s grasps the givenness of the acrobat's experience of his own performance or the feelings stirred in him by the movements he is carrying out. The spectator's primordial experience of the acrobat's performance ($I_s \underline{F} M$), which is obviously very different from the acrobat's own experience, can be compared with both the spectator's primordial feelings ($I_s \underline{V} (I_s \underline{F} M)$) aroused by his or her experiences, and the non-primordial experience of the acrobat's feelings in empathy: $I_s \underline{G} (I_a \underline{U} (I_a \underline{E} M))$. In this example the spectator grasps how the acrobat feels about his performance. This in turn might be compared with the non-primordial experience in empathy of the acrobat's experience itself: $I_s \underline{G} (I_a \underline{E} M)$.

Empathy is not equivalent to a feeling of unity in this case. Nevertheless there is a sense in which the experience of unity or oneness with the other may be genuine. It is when two or more people experience the same emotion over the same event and in so doing enhance each other's experience. For example, one participant may in the explication stage reveal to the others an aspect of the initiating event which they had missed, thus enhancing their empathic experience. In this situation I suggest that the members are in mutual empathy.

If the same thing happens to the others, we empathically enrich our feeling so that "we" now feel a different joy from "I", "you", and "he" in isolation. But "I", "you", and "he" are retained in "we". A "we", not an "I", is the subject of the empathizing. Not through the feeling of oneness, but through empathizing, do we experience others. The feeling of oneness and the enrichment of our own experience become possible through empathy. (94)

I would have said: through *mutual* empathy. Notice also that in unity the separateness of the participants is preserved. Mutual empathy simultaneously unites and asserts the separateness of the members of the experience.

From a phenomenological point of view Stein feels that it is important to clarify the status of empathy (still in pure description). She poses three questions:

- (1) Are empathized experiences primordial or not?
- (2) Are foreign experiences objectively given as something facing me or given experientially?
- (3) Are they intuitively or non-intuitively given (and if intuitively, in the character of perception or representation)?
(95)

We now know that the answer to the first question is that they are not but the second poses problems. There is no doubt that foreign experience is "out there" and the explication stage frequently leads to the clarification of possibly vague presentiments, surely a move towards objective givenness. On the other hand the over-against relation is inconsistent with the notion of empathy which rests on an initial grasping of the other's givenness directly, i.e. non-analytically. Stein's own position appears unequivocal: empathy is one experience announcing another (in which the subjects of the two experiences are different people). Is it a case of neither objective

nor experiential givenness? Or is it both? I have suggested in Chapter 2 that in certain circumstances the latter is at least an arguable hypothesis.(96)

The third question is even more problematical. We can obviously know the other's feelings by being told rather than ourselves experiencing his or her givenness but the "knowledge" so gained is very different if for no better reason than that in the former condition the other's expressiveness need form no part of the "knowledge"; in the second case it is essential. Not only is the "knowledge" different; so is the phenomenal object itself. Recalling the comparison of empathy with sympathy in Chapter 2 we can say that indirectly gained information about another may excite our sympathy but never establish, of itself, our empathic relation with him or her. Only personal contact and goodwill can initiate empathy. Similarly the other's expressiveness is not a phenomenon which is subjected to intellectual analysis the results of which enable us to know and understand the other's feelings. This seems to me to constitute the Achilles' heel of the social skills industry in which it is assumed that mere knowledge of non-verbal skills (including their use) is a sure way into the hearts and minds of those whom we wish to know and understand.

As to the choice of perception or representation as a suitable model for understanding empathy we can say that perceptual experience is very different from empathy. While the object of empathy (or quasi-empathy) and that of perception may be physically before us here and now, there is all the world of difference between perceiving a human being and grasping his or her givenness in empathy. To recognise the shape approaching us as Fred, the man next door, depends on the marker-recognition process in which we come to know and remember the sets of properties (markers) and their interrelations as Fred (and which we call the perception of Fred). In empathy, as Stein describes it, we grasp instantly in an intuitive act, Fred's givenness at a specific moment (e.g. he's going to ask us to lend him a fiver) through his expressiveness. Perception usually involves an interpretative activity; empathy, in its initial phase leads to an immediate, non-analytical apprehension that such-and-such is the case.

Both convey meaning but by very different routes or processes. On the other hand they are obviously related in some way since the sensorium appears to be involved in both and both lead to action (or may do so). Comparing the two like this exposes the difficulty of deciding between them; we need to know far more about the nature of both and the possible relations between them.

Representation is likewise different from empathy yet we must accept that grasping another's expressiveness implies some kind of ability to "read" the other which in turn suggests some kind of representation. What does representation mean in this case? In general how is our experience made known (represented) to us? Stein concludes that the last question is unresolvable within the existing psychological categories of her day; I think this is still true.

At this juncture we can make a number of observations about Edith Stein's account. Empathy must involve all three stages. Although she says that individuals may rest content with lower grades the full experience of empathy depends on passing through all three grades. Although she does not say so there is always the possibility of the various stages being imperfectly carried out. The emergence of the experience may be marked by vagueness, the explication may be incomplete and hence the final objectification stage less than adequate for grasping the other's experience, i.e. understanding it, fully. Empathy must be an iterative process, a constant re-experiencing of the other's foreignness, and so a repetition of all the stages until the other is understood. This can surely only be done cooperatively, i.e. in mutual empathy, where the participants strive to understand each other. But then why should they do this unless they also cooperate in some shared venture and do so on a basis which both have accepted and agreed to? Edith Stein's account of empathy has a one-way ring to it.

Her review of the (then current) psychogenetic explanations of empathy focusses on two questions:

- (1) what psychological mechanism functions in the experience of empathy?
- (2) how has the individual acquired this mechanism in the course of his or her development?

She considers and rejects theories of imitation, association and inference from analogy. She also dismisses Scheler's arguments fairly exhaustively. I will not take up her attacks but will bear in mind her two questions. They provide a good basis for evaluating my own contribution.

3.52 David Stewart

Although Stewart does not explicitly claim a phenomenological bias in his approach to unravelling empathy, either as a concept or as a phenomenon, there is much in his account which is at least sympathetic to a phenomenological viewpoint. He is certainly closer to Edith Stein than to any other theorist. Firstly, his analysis turns on concepts such as person, action (and hence agency), and personal knowing. He points towards and explores a personal psychology.

A personal psychology, then, a basic psychology of personal knowing in its highest form, the act of empathy, is what we have to develop if we wish to solve the problem of knowing and being...(97)

The basic concept is *person*, not mind, not body, not mental states, not sense data.(98)

Central to Stewart's notion of person is the idea of identity (what I have called personhood as does Stewart from time to time) and its developmental dependence on others. It is through empathy (the highest form of personal knowing) which is defined as "deliberate identification with another, accompanied by growing insight into oneself and the other"(99) that we become persons.

Stewart's first formal definition conveys something of the flavour of his thinking which, considering the date of publication (1956), vividly contrasts with the more pedestrian views of most psychologists working in this field then or since.

Empathy is deliberate identification with another, promoting one's knowledge of the other as well as of oneself in striving to understand what is now foreign but which one may imagine, curbed by the other's responses, to be something similar to one's own experience. Empathy is therefore both a process of intuition and the basis of dynamic inference.(100)

The various points which I have highlighted and which this definition sharpens form the subject matter of the discussion which follows. Three things need to be said first however. One is that Stewart drew on a Freudian theoretical framework though he was not

slavishly addicted to it. Secondly, he was concerned with the epistemological dilemmas involved in developing a personal psychology as compared with a mechanistic, i.e. a scientific, psychology.

If it is person, as distinct from object whom you wish to know it is essential to identify with him, before you can say anything scientific about him...if you do not go beyond the scientific phase, you cannot say that you know a person. At best, you may say that you have a scientific knowledge about a human being, a living creature, a biological entity...Scientific knowledge of persons, or rather a knowledge of persons in their role as human beings, or as biological entities, lies between initial identification and the deliberate re-identification which enables you to say, when you can, that you know a person.
(101)

The distinctions and epistemological problems Stewart airs in this excerpt are familiar enough nowadays to readers of modern writers such as Gauld and Shotter, Harre, and Thines but he is unique in the empathy literature both in being aware of them and in attempting some kind of resolution.

Thirdly, the dynamic thread underlying his notion of empathy is goodwill which for him is a given, an irreducible phenomenon, characteristic of human existence;

...empathy presupposes good trying. In the case of knowing persons, good trying appears to be what is commonly known as good-will (sic)...There are natural sources within any person which constitute the basic material of good-will. These deep-rooted sources are intuitive.(102)

As a guide to the following analysis of Stewart's position we can summarise his theory in the form of a table:

PRE-EMPATHIC PHASE

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| first stage: | transference and unconscious identification leading to resistance (both false and genuine) |
| second stage: | unconscious imitation followed by conscious imitation (free and imposed) |

EMPATHY PROPER

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| first stage: | deliberate, i.e. conscious, identification in which similarities are explored |
| second stage: | encountering the foreign in the other and the exploration of differences |

POST-EMPATHY PHASE	joint action in pursuit of a shared common goal or ideal (leading to good fellowship and interpersonal harmony)
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Two footnotes in Freud's writings impressed Stewart. The first points to the aim of therapy: "to give the patient's ego freedom to

choose one way or the other".(103) The second comes from Group Psychology and the Ego:

...a path leads from identification by way of imitation to empathy, that is, to the comprehension of the mechanism by means of which we are enabled to take up any attitude at all towards another mental life...(identifications) result among other things in a person limiting his aggressiveness towards those with whom he had identified himself, and in his sparing them and giving them help.(104)

Stewart interprets these statements as saying that since identification is likely to initiate (the conscious manifestation of) goodwill the patient, through the empathiser's (or therapist's) goodwill, is encouraged or inspired freely to choose one way or the other. For Stewart freedom in the sense implied is the goal of empathy and goodwill the means for reaching it, although he does admit that the proposition could as well be expressed the other way round.

3.521 The pre-empathy phase (first stage)

Borrowing Freud's idea of transference (which, he points out, does not commit us to accepting his psychosexual theory) Stewart claims that all interpersonal relations stem from this tendency among humans to form emotional attachments to others.

The universal phenomenon of transference is an illustration of a downright natural process arising spontaneously in any human relationship. Thus it is *a priori* because while instances of it must arise in experience, it is the basis of *all* interpersonal experiences...When the value of transference is noted as a means to interpersonal knowledge it can only be promoted by good-will - the conscious manifestation of that which unconsciously and spontaneously is the very ground of the transference process.(105)

Naturally Stewart is here talking of positive transference, an affectionate bond with the other. But

Let there be either ignorance of the means by which transference is fostered, or a lack of finesse in applying the means, and resistance will arrest the process and the transference will be negative...(106)

It seems to me that Stewart might have explored more than he did the possibility of negative bonds being formed as I have tried to do in presenting separately the various potentially empathic relations that can be met in the real world. His failure to do likewise weakens his theoretical position since coping with a hostile or negative or indifferent other presents theoretical difficulties not encountered in the more positive instances. I have gone to some trouble to

show this in Chapter 1. In all that follows the reader must assume that the empathiser has established a positive bond with the other who may initially resent this gesture of goodwill but who eventually tries to move closer to the empathiser. The point for Stewart is that goodwill is not a matter of choice; we all have it to some extent though some appear to be more naturally well-disposed to their fellow humans than others. The *conscious* form of goodwill develops through the spontaneous identification and resistance process.

In unconscious identification one individual perceives a common quality shared with another "who is not an object of sexual instinct." (107) Freud held that there is a positive correlation between the perceived importance to the identifier of this common quality and the strength of his or her resulting identification with the other. This spontaneous, undisciplined act leads to resistance which may take various forms. For example, one may "perceive" a trait in the other which is, in fact, a characteristic of one's own. Stewart cites as an instance the shock which a person may experience on learning that his companion beats his wife or neglects his children. Then the first person remembers occasions when he similarly caused suffering to his own family and learns (later, in empathy) not to blame the other for something he has been guilty of himself. Alternatively the identifier may over-idealise himself or the other. A person may see himself as generous and so impute meanness to the other by comparison. The truth may be that the first person is far from generous (a fact which in empathy may eventually come to light); the injustice to the other is a kind of compensation for one's own inadequacy.

Where these two kinds of resistance betray a false identification the third kind is genuine. Here "one identifies one's own insecurity and fear with that confronted in the other and thus magnifies them". (108) The outcome of later exploration (in empathy) is the discovery of "those features of one's own life which are forever unfathomable and beyond one's control, and yet a necessary part of one's life." (109) A chronic gambler may see in an alcoholic the same defects of immaturity: impulsiveness, grandiosity, and wishful thinking that he recognises in himself. He learns to accept them as part of his nat-

ure and gradually learns with the other in empathy how to control *their effects*.

3.522 Stage two of the pre-empathy stage

The identification-resistance process leads to what Stewart calls transitional imitation in which "there is a grasping for unity as though the vaguely defined imitator were seeking his own identity in the person or persons imitated." (110) This imitation takes the form of crude mimicry of gestures and the like. Stewart cites as examples the boy who mimics his father's smoking or the punished child who smacks a doll. Fear leads to placatory behaviour which nevertheless exhibits at least a primitive form of trying. This form of imitation, however, fails to lead to a genuine sense of identity. One must "be oneself before it makes sense to say one knows another." (111) That is to say, one's own intentions and purposes must become clearer and form the basis of one's own actions and these processes can only occur if imitation becomes conscious. However, this may be expressed in two forms: imposed or free. In the former case the self may be imposed upon or impose on others.

At this stage the importance of goodwill can scarcely be overstressed. It shapes the trend towards free imitation and ultimately to deliberate identification (the first stage of the empathic process itself). Goodwill is "that which fosters both unity with others and one's difference from others." (112) One's own identity is not to be purchased at the cost of a loss of unity with others but at the same time this effort towards unity must not sacrifice one's self-identity. As Stewart puts it, "the organism is striving for traffic with others and at the same time for self-assertion." (113)

Stewart is at pains to remind us that there is nothing miraculous or mysterious about this struggle for unity in separateness (or separateness in unity). The blind striving-trying-conscious effort sequence may be hidden as to its inner workings but the "struggle to know" is recognisable enough in everyday affairs. So also is the uncertainty of its course and the frequent waywardness of its development. We make mistakes, impose on others, submit to their imposi-

tions, and so on; but if goodwill informs our efforts these errors will tend to diminish both in their frequency and in their effect.

Knowing how one is both like and unlike others, knowing one's identify and respecting others - the empathic process in its ideal form - is not a situation immaculately conceived. It has to be struggled for as long as we live.(114)

And the first positive step towards this ideal form of mutual empathy is free imitation:

...the seeing of authentic differences depends on the exhausting of common traits. It is therefore free imitation, imitation free of impositions from without which promotes goodwill.(115)

Stewart's own therapeutic practice with alcoholics and drug addicts provided him with plenty of material to support these hypotheses. The alcoholic who tries to attain sobriety by following the exhortations of his friends, relatives, employer may succeed in "staying on the wagon" for a time and even severely censure others like himself who fall by the wayside. Eventually the strain of adopting and following an ideal (sobriety) which is not his and with which he cannot really identify prove too much and a minor incident is enough to trigger off yet another bender. He rebels in the only way he can. But

When imitation leads to empathy the imitator is well disposed towards his exemplar and wants personally to imitate him. He becomes the other because he likes him. But because he likes the other, he wants the other to be himself...In free imitation roles are willingly exchanged between persons, each enhancing his own identity in the process.(116)

So already Stewart is talking about a process between *persons* though he does introduce in somewhat random fashion other terms such as individual and organism. Our knowledge of ourselves and of the world

...will be found in a form of identification, of resistance, and perhaps of a form of them together. But this knowledge will come from a form created by *persons in community*, not from human organisms in isolation.(117)

This theme will be taken up again later. Resistance is met once again after the free imitation stage en route to empathy. It is during this final resistance that we discover the nature of the original resistance as mistaken (if it was) and confine ourselves to the third genuine type.

3.523 Empathy

In the first stage of empathy a self explores consciously what he or she has in common with another. In the process I may also discover things in myself which I do not much care for and so generate self-resistance but I will also encounter the genuinely foreign in the other. This is where the stage of deliberate identification (conscious exploration of similarities) gradually gives way to the second stage: the conscious exploration of differences. For Stewart this involves the use of imagination and analogy. An addictive gambler may identify with a confirmed alcoholic and perceive their common qualities, the immature characteristics referred to earlier. In exploring their differences, however, (i.e. in striving to understand the foreign in the other he tries to find parallels to the other's addiction to alcohol in his own gambling behaviour and its attendant feelings and attitudes. The thrill of winning and the hope of riches and the transformations they will bring to the gambler's life-chances may be analogous to the alcoholic's joy in the relief from fear which he seeks through drinking. In imaginative exploration of his analogy the gambler can reach towards the other's feelings. The foreignness of the other's experiences is at least partially penetrated by the combined use of imagination and analogy; the underlying similarity of the problems each experiences is at least partially revealed.

Stewart distinguishes the two states of affairs in this phase of empathy proper:

But even where two alcoholics are concerned, excluding the problem of their differences on countless grounds other than their drinking problem, the feeling of oneness-with will accompany the feeling of respect for the other as different from oneself. This may be expressed as a distinction within the empathic process corresponding to *Einsfuhlung* and *Einfuhlung*. In *Einsfuhlung* - being at one with another - we do not differentiate. We live in and with the feelings of the other. Practically speaking we completely agree on the meaning of certain experiences...In *Einfuhlung* each implicitly confers on the other his identity by imagining the other to be what he is, after comparing some item of the other's behaviour with behaviour of one's own. In *Einsfuhlung*, therefore, the other gets his personal identity - insofar as he gets it, outside himself, from me. (118)

In empathy, the, fear or resentment of the other's foreignness gives way to respect for the other. Perception of difference is transform-

ed into acceptance of not only the other's uniqueness but also of one's own. Once again the role of goodwill is manifest; not only effort but well-disposed (as opposed to well-meaning) effort is essential. Unlike Freud's concept of identification, which appears to refer to a process that limits the growing individual's range of action, Stewart sees his own interpretation as one which emphasises liberation. Once individuals recognise and accept how alike and different they are they implicitly acknowledge their own and the other's identity. Each confirms and reaffirms the other's uniqueness thus enhancing his own as well as the other's identity.

It seems to me that Stewart's claim that identification is liberating is just. I think that his notion of deliberate identification is one of his most important contributions to the explication of empathy. It brings into a single focus several ideas and processes central to our understanding of empathy: agent, action and goodwill; person and intention; the social origin of persons.

3.524 Post-empathy stage

Once again Stewart is inspired by Freud. In the first excerpt below Freud points to a relation between identification and the idea of ethical action:

The Church requires that the position of the libido which is given by a group formation should be supplemented. Identification has to be added where object-choice has taken place and object-love where there is identification. This addition evidently goes beyond the constitution of the group. This further development in the distribution of libido in the group is probably the factor upon which Christianity bases its claim to have reached a higher ethical level.(119)

Couple this with one of Freud's references to leaderless groups:

We should above all be concerned with the distinction between groups which have a leader and leaderless groups. We should consider whether groups with leaders may not be the more primitive and complete, whether in others an idea, an abstraction, may not be substituted for the leader (a state of things in which religious groups, with their invisible head, form a transition state), and whether a common tendency, a wish in which a number of people can have a share, may not in the same way serve as a substitute.(120)

Finally, one of Freud's many interpretations of identification:

Identification...may arise with every new perception of a common quality shared with some other person who is not an object of sexual instinct.(121)

Bringing all these together we might, with Stewart, imagine that any specific community is held together through the members' identification with a shared common ideal which that community thus embodies. Stewart examines Alcoholics Anonymous from this perspective. It is a leaderless community in which alcoholics seek sobriety and identify eventually with their sponsors: recovered alcoholics (object-choice). In time the alcoholic reaches out to others like himself (object-love) and shows concern for them. The learning process is not straightforward and many mishaps occur on the way but the underlying goodwill of sponsors and fellow alcoholics leads to his deliberate identification with sponsors and his willingness to sponsor new members himself. This is empathy in action in a real world setting which Stewart knows well.(122) It typifies the emergence of personhood though Stewart's terminology and process description are different from mine. The whole empathic cycle focusses on action (i.e. conscious deliberate choice) though action is not always evident and sometimes fails to achieve its objective. The finale, however, leaves no doubt about the potential for a successful outcome. If we translate "ethical" into "that which promotes the rejection of self-limiting conduct and attitudes" we can say that individuals who identify with one another in terms of a shared common goal (e.g. the adoption of self-liberating conduct and attitudes) will be moved to act in concert to pursue that goal or ideal and in the process will not only achieve personhood (personal identity) but will also discover and respect the foreignness of others and thus accord to them their personal identities. The result in community is the growth of interpersonal harmony or good fellowship. "The concept of brotherhood, of fellowship, is sound in any group united by a strong common tendency and goal, and by the ethical theme at work in deliberate striving for the goal."(123)

A number of points in Stewart's account still need attention. He stresses, for example, the importance for individuals that they recognise a power greater than themselves:

To dignify one's effort to become "a person", to preserve the feeling of fellowship as against the feeling of being mastered, to stimulate open-mindedness and humility, is to generate and increase the communication which brings insight. To be a person, or to try to be, is to recognise a sense of incompleteness which needs to be compensated in fellowship. And fellowship,

fostering respect for the other as for oneself, seems to flourish best in the mutual recognition of a power greater than any or all of the group members.(124)

For Stewart this greater power, though entitled to be called a religious belief (so long as no dogma or doctrine is implied), is not something absolute but merely "a *belief* basic to the sense of incompleteness defining a person..." Stewart insists that this belief is freely adopted in the course of the empathic process. People will vary as to what they bring to the relation and whatever they bring there is always more to discover.

...in any relation of one person to another person, or thing, in interpersonal relations or in science, an open-minded attitude is necessary. This attitude always allows the possibility of something still to be known and respected.(125)

This is reminiscent of my own concept of non-manipulative openness but Stewart seems to have discovered it late in the empathic process and does not seem to accord it the importance or attention it merits. Considering the tenor of his approach to empathy this is surprising.

A second point which he stresses is that Alcoholics Anonymous does not *demand* recognition of a greater power but merely points to its value, by virtue of its way of working as briefly described above, in terms of self-liberation (in the correction of self-limiting coping strategies, for example), and of acknowledging that the ideal sought by all members transcends them individually and collectively. Freedom to choose is as essential to recovery as goodwill enshrined in identification. "The dignity of "person" which gives him a meaning different from human being, is a dignity arising from his capacity to choose, to deliberate, to imagine, to identify - in a word, to empathize."(126) And this dignity cannot be conferred by but rather *through* another which is made clear to him by the other's "initial identification in transference which becomes an act of empathy in fellowship".(127) Part of being a person in community with other persons is thus a consciousness of incompleteness which can only be remedied with the help of others but non-manipulatively and in a spirit of open-mindedness. And this can only happen in that process we call empathy.

There is one last point about Stewart's approach to empathy which in fact is implied in the above observations. The empathic relation is essentially non-judgemental. One's emergence to personhood cannot be externally evaluated for only the individual knows where he or she stands at any particular moment in the process which is by nature dynamic. There is no prescribed target which determines or could determine measures of progress. The ideal or goal is a general aim but the day-to-day actions are part of an individual biography in interaction with others who are similarly engaged and which reflect the degree of abandonment of self-limiting strategies in favour of self-liberating ones. Progress is measured by personal experience of positive achievement as seen by the agent in terms of his or her own actions and to the extent that the agent perceives him or herself to be in self-control.

3.525 Stewart's second thoughts

A decade after *Preface to Empathy* notions of self-control featured much more prominently in his thinking but his approach to empathy also took a new direction. In the later paper(128) he is far more concerned with the contrasting modes of experiencing ourselves in our world: the modes of having and being. For him empathy centres on the latter and is a corrective of disorders arising out of the former:

Empathy requires of me genuine contact with you, recognition of you, and acquaintance with you in a feeling of goodwill. To be empathic I must put myself in your place so that I can be at one with you and at the same time know that each of us is himself. I come to respect that which is foreign in you if I cannot recognize in myself what I encounter in you. In striving to understand you, I may well reduce much of what I had regarded as strange if I allow you to be yourself, and equally, if you allow me to be myself. The interpersonal encounter is disciplined by the free give-and-take of our revelations to one another.(129)

The "new" elements are genuine contact, recognition and acquaintance which lead to empathy. Their newness lies in their new guise. Gone is all reference to identification, whether spontaneous or deliberate. In fact in a footnote he laments "that empathy is not yet well-defined, and is often mistaken for equally confusing terms; e.g. identification, projection."(130) Imitation, however, survives: transitional, imposed and free; only the latter "paved by contact and

recognition, is a phase of acquaintance, one step short of empathy". (131) In that next step we meet the paradox of empathy: the separateness of personal identity and unity with the other.

The experience of *being* distinguishes the act of empathy in two phases at once - being oneself, and being at one with the other. (132)

Imposed imitation leads to defensive strategies such as "projection of blame, over-expectancy, and fear of the foreign." (133) They have their source in the influence of the having mode of existence. They can only be cured through empathy in which the sufferer strives for the detachment of the empathiser. Thus does the recovered alcoholic understand (feel for) the addict before him in his desperate longing for freedom from addiction. This is only possible in empathy which "is the capacity to relive vicariously in myself your state, as yours, other than mine, without thereby becoming what you are." (134) This reminds us of Scheler's sympathy and of Carl Rogers' definition of empathy.

Stewart still grapples with the relationship between personal and scientific knowing as he did in the earlier work but no more convincingly, I feel, because he does not distinguish clearly enough the nature of the objects of scientific knowing. Whilst he says that it cannot be the person he appears less sure of how best to construe a scientific study of human beings. His treatment of the contact-recognition-acquaintance sequence shows the influence of Macmurray who stressed that knowledge of another as a person was only possible through action which by its nature led to contact with the other and hence to the experience of the other's resistance. In empathy, action (and the agent) is free but in defensive conduct (in pseudo-action) the agent is not free. Neither is he a "whole" person; he is a crippled person, afflicted with one or more of the ailments referred to earlier: holding others to blame for his defects, over-expectancy from self and others, and perhaps most significantly of all, the self-sufficiency myth often expressed as fear of the foreign. All of these are substantially self-imposed deficiencies and have their roots in the having mode of living.

In contrast Stewart sees healthy actions as manifestations of the ideals of being: personal freedom, creative effort, and fellowship. To attain personal freedom

I must therefore abandon the priority of my human will, which urges me to use you as an instrument of self-enhancement, because you, as a person, make it clear that you, too, want to be yourself and that my using you merely as an instrument will destroy your personhood and my own as well. You have to regard me in the same way. You and I then see that we must be disposed towards one another in a common bond of goodwill.(135)

It is during this process of fostering goodwill that the defensive manoeuvres give way to acceptance of what Stewart calls the three losses: loss of support, loss of control, and loss of love. We must throw away the prop of blaming others and accept responsibility for our own conduct; we must accept control of ourselves and abandon the having/being had outlook; and we must turn to loving rather than adhering to a dependence on being loved, to nurturing others instead of being preoccupied with self-concern. So long as we do not cling to, or fall back on to, an illusion of self-sufficiency this shift from being loved to loving (which at first sight may feel like a rejection) will cause us no harm. On the contrary it will greatly extend our personal identity.

The capacity to love is usually shown in goodwill which, therapeutically, means much more than a comfortable feeling towards those easy to like. It extends to persons who differ from us and whom we may even dislike.(136)

Because there are no rules or techniques for promoting personal freedom we must find our own way as best we can. This is more likely to succeed if we join with others with a similar wish for personal freedom. In community with others there is a greater chance of creative effort emerging just because the members are striving intelligently, conscientiously, to attain, in empathy, authentic freedom, i.e. their personhoods. Thus the ideal of fellowship is really implicit in the other two losses. All three, of course, occur in action in the real world. There is nothing magical or mysterious or elusive about these ideals. They stem from real world experience. What matters is the predisposing goodwill and the empathic process which it energises. The rest follows often painfully and fitfully but in time more or less successfully.

I make no apologies for presenting Stewart's two accounts at length for his view of empathy is obviously the progenitor of my own. But apart from this his treatment is unique in that it seems closer to real world phenomena than any other which I have come across, including Edith Stein's. Her analysis is in many respects equally penetrating and far more impressive in describing a real world phenomenon than those which followed her. Stewart's revised version is an improvement on the original in my view in that he has laid aside Freudian theory especially in accounting for the earlier phases of empathy. His apparent abandonment of deliberate identification is a loss although he retains nevertheless the process of exploring similarities and differences. His form of non-manipulative openness is not well articulated into his empathic process and goodwill, a crucial element in it, is rather vague. In my own account I combine the two with the notion of love which stems from respect (which he does not clarify and which I interpret in the manner of Fromm). Likewise his introduction of the contrast between the having and being modes of living and their relationship to empathy is an improvement but they really call for fuller treatment. Above all there is the phenomenological spirit which pervades both accounts and which with Stein separates him from the majority of workers in this area.

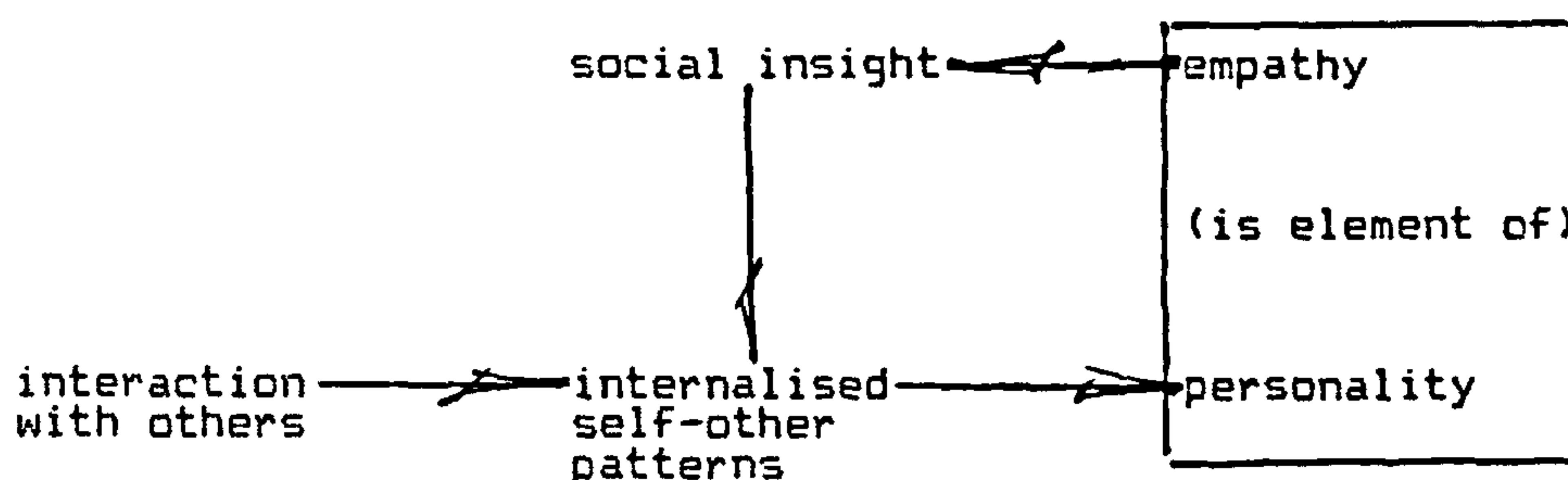
3.6 SUMMARY

It is difficult to summarise this chapter without repeating myself. It might help to recall Edith Stein's criteria for evaluating psychogenetic explanations of empathy:

- (1) what psychological mechanism functions in the experience of empathy?
- (2) how has the individual acquired this mechanism in the course of his or her development?

Consider first the views of those who construe empathy as some function of role-taking ability (or more generally those who see empathy as a trait). For them the psychological mechanisms centre on the notion of personality trait though whether this is to be understood as innate or learned or some mixture of both they do not say. Chapin may have considered the possibility that social insight, being an

aspect of social intelligence, had properties like 'g' of general intelligence and was therefore substantially innate (the currently held view in psychological circles at the time though not necessarily shared by sociologists) but aided by experience throughout life. Dymond, in her original thoughts on empathy, appears to stress the learned aspects of role-taking as part of her theory of personality development. In her account, however, empathy is a precursor to social insight which in turn enables an individual to exploit the self-other patterns which he or she has internalised from experience of interactions with others. A by-product of this internalising process in the evolution of the individual is "a picture of himself as a distinct personality". Since empathic ability is presumably part of this distinct personality we appear to have a circular argument:



One way out of this closed system is to separate the innate element from the learned. Clearly for Dymond personality is acquired; empathy must therefore be innate.

Hogan is unambiguous. Empathy is genetically determined and is conceptually equivalent to both role-taking ability and social sensitivity. As we have seen he made a deliberate effort to unmask the character of empathy firstly in terms of two roles: the empathic actor and the empathic audience; and secondly, in terms of two psychical structures of personality: role structure and character structure. The first is learned; the second is (presumably) innate and corresponds to social intelligence.

Kagan and his co-workers equate empathy with affective sensitivity which "is a psychological trait which is measurable..." Moreover, it is a trait associated with person perception and is vulnerable to the depredations of unconscious defence mechanisms. They do not

claim so but the element of empathy associated with person perception might be innate (along with other perceptual mechanisms). In contrast, the actual exercise of empathy is learned though the influence of the defence mechanisms, has its origins in both nature (Freud's instinct) and nurture (the individual's own experiences). These conjectures are mine, not Kagan's, but I offer them as suggestions which might have occurred to him and his team.

Kerr and Speroff construed empathy as an ability to generalise about others in order to be able to anticipate their "reactions, feelings and behaviours". They overtly refer to the predictive character of empathy which other researchers, Dymond for instance, only implied in the design of their measuring instruments. Whether Kerr and Speroff held that this ability is predominantly innate or learned is difficult to judge. Many of those working in the field of person perception seem to treat "sensitive" perception (judgement) of others as though it were an innate ability, a trait like any other, which of course may profit from experience.

Though different workers use different labels (social insight, social sensitivity, affective sensitivity, empathic ability, predictive ability) they all appear to be exploring a single idea: there exists an act in which one individual somehow grasps the thoughts, reactions, feelings of another as the property of that other. It is true that each investigator tends to emphasise one aspect rather than another, a tendency which is partially reflected in the name each chooses to identify the phenomenon. All, however, are faced with the problem of saying how ability to acquire and execute this act is to be understood. How does it arise? What is its dynamic character in psychological terms? How does it evolve over time? Only Hogan seems to have tried to answer these questions or rather has moved in a direction which perhaps increases the likelihood of finding answers. Thus empathy viewed as ability has led to a single though seldom explicitly expressed concept: a host of names for it but only one attempt to give it psychological meaning. What kind of perceptual act is it? How does it differ from other kinds of perceptual act? How are its innate and learned properties to be conceptualised and distinguished? What situational factors aid or hinder its growth? What

is the nature of this growth process? These and many other questions are ignored by workers in this tradition. Even Hogan, perhaps because of his greater interest in moral development, does not concern himself with them.

If we turn now to empathy viewed as a skill (a notion which, as we have seen, is often buried in the ability approach) we find a very similar situation. Bronfenbrenner and his colleagues distinguish various categories of social sensitivity (their name for empathy) in terms of social object: the generalised other, group differences, and interpersonal sensitivity; and referent: non-personal, first, second and third person sensitivities. But how do we recognise these types? How do we come to believe in these categories? Why do we believe in them? How does interpersonal sensitivity differ psychologically from perception of group differences and generalised others? How do we develop these "skills"? What is their psychological nature?

Argyle chose a psychomotor skills model to provide a theoretical framework within which to explicate social skills. He has been much concerned with non-verbal interactions and the training of people in the development and use of non-verbal techniques of communication. Whilst he has not concerned himself specifically with empathy he does have a lot to say about the practical consequences of social skills training. Perhaps for him psychological explanations of phenomena are less important than proven success in teaching sales staff, managers and other interpersonal professional workers how to cope successfully with other people. One benefit of Argyle's work for students of empathy is his list of indicators of human expressiveness: eye contact, facial movements, body posture, gestures, limb movements, and so on. He has developed ways of observing and recording all of these in a variety of settings in order to discover their informational significance.

In the clinical setting various workers have conducted systematic analyses of both the nature of the skills required for successful performance and their natural development as a single superskill: counselling, therapy, interviewing, and so forth. Most of these researchers are interested in the counselling or therapy process rath-

er than the psychological mechanisms underlying it. Their business is very largely a matter of isolating sets of subskills, naming them and describing their contribution to the total enterprise. This is a valuable addition to our knowledge but still leaves undone the delineation of the psychological mechanisms responsible and an account of how they come into being and develop. This is perhaps understandable in the empathy-as-skill tradition because of the greater interest in training and the greater value attached to high levels of therapist performance than to psychological explanations.

Although implicit (and sometimes explicit) in the thinking of workers in this tradition, the part played by some kind of perceptual act is implemented by the even greater role of action, often interventionist, towards the object of empathy. This is certainly true of Carkhuff and his group and is generally true of those concerned with therapy and its outcomes. There is little sign of any interest in the psychological mechanisms which may be at work here, either in the empathising agent or in his or her client. Change is regarded as a desirable thing, however construed, and justifications are expressed in terms of the researcher's preferred theory of psychotherapy. Empathy, however, where it survives at all as a concept (which does not appear to be the case with Carkhuff and his associates), is not elaborated. In the two traditions we have overviewed so far empathy seems to be a perceptual mechanism somewhere in the background enabling people to grasp the inner feelings, and so on, of others and possibly encouraging the empathiser to act in appropriate ways towards them.

The third tradition, stemming from Carl Rogers' 1957 and 1959 papers breaks new ground in that the focus is on the notion of personal being. The person, not the psychophysical individual or the organism, is the object of study and empathy is viewed as one of the necessary conditions for approaching another human being as a person. Rogers himself never probed empathy but several of his students did. Barret-Lennard conceptualised empathy as a cyclical process which is reiterated throughout an interpersonal relationship. He isolates a number of the psychological mechanisms involved: empathic set, resonance to the other's expressiveness, expression of empathy, receiv-

ing of empathy by the other (i.e. the other's resonance to the empathiser's expressiveness), and various kinds of feedback which restart the whole process or sustain it in modified form. Empathy (or empathic understanding as Barrett-Lennard calls it) is a function of two elements: empathic recognition and empathic inference. Once again the peculiar perceptual act reappears but augmented now by an interpretative element: inference. It must be said in all fairness that the other two traditions imply some kind of interpretation but this aspect seems to be subsumed under the general concept of the special perceptual experience. Barrett-Lennard distinguishes the two and goes on to argue that the two abilities appear to be necessary for empathic understanding: an ability to discriminate and a non-manipulative acceptance of the other as he or she "comes across". Hence he suggests that empathisers need to be non-defensive and well-integrated persons. Here is a set of ideas which provide the basis for a psychogenetic explanation of empathy. He has attempted to answer the first of Edith Stein's two questions, though he does not elaborate on the nature of these hypothesised psychological mechanisms. As to her second question Barrett-Lennard puts forward a dynamic process but does not say how it arises nor how the process evolves. Nevertheless as a description of empathy his account seems to me to fit actual experience more closely than those of his empirically orientated predecessors. (He seems to have been unaware of Stewart's analysis.) I have already presented my own misgivings about his cyclical model so will not repeat them here.

The phenomenologists form the fourth tradition in my selection from the empathy literature. Of Edith Stein and Max Scheler I shall say no more here but the work of Stewart, on which I have partly based my own analysis, approaches much closer to an outline of the psychogenesis of empathy than do any of the other psychological studies we have met. In his original account the psychological mechanisms are drawn from Freudian theory: positive (and negative) transference, unconscious identification, imitation (though more elaborately treated than Freud's concept), and the idea of a goal or ideal which somehow transcends individuals and serves as a substitute for the leader in a leaderless group (or dyad). To these he added two new

ideas: love (not to be confused with Freud's object-love and object-cathexis although Stewart quotes Freud and uses his terms in justifying his own analysis) and deliberate identification, a kind of conscious re-identification. Moreover the evolution of empathy mediated by these psychological mechanisms is couched in the language of Freudian psychodynamics but only up to a point, owing nothing to Freud's bias towards psychosexual development. Stewart's treatment of love and respect is sketchy despite their importance in the development of empathy. He never quite makes up his mind whether empathy is a process dependent on inherent abilities of the empathiser or whether it is a particular kind of relation. The difficulty, as always with Freudian theory, is accepting a theoretical framework which is inherently untestable. Perhaps it was considerations of this sort that led Stewart to abandon the Freudian scaffolding and opt for an existentialist position founded on the notion of relinquishing (falsely conceived) independence. The belief in and pursuit of self-sufficiency is illusory. Through others we may come to accept responsibility for our own conduct instead of leaning on others, accept self-control in place of exploiting or manipulating others, love them rather than crave their love. Whilst his revised view of empathy has the authenticity of a poetic imagination it is less easy to see the underlying psychological mechanisms; the evolutionary process has likewise become somewhat blurred compared with his earlier account. Nevertheless his achievement is considerable not only in terms of Edith Stein's two criteria but in his bold exploration of the epistemological and ontological foundations of psychology which he construed as the study of persons and personal knowing. He anticipates Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow (often cited as the apostles of the humanist movement in psychology thus revealing, in my view, a misunderstanding of both humanism and the contribution of these two psychologists to the growth of our science) and seems to me to be the first to attempt, however sketchily, an outline of a psychology of personal being.

Chapter 3 Notes

- 1 Chapin, 1939; p.166.
- 2 Chapin, 1942; p.214.
- 3 *ibid.* p.215.
- 4 Dymond, 1949.
- 5 Chapin, 1942; p.214.
- 6 Dymond, 1948; p.232.
- 7 Dymond, 1949; p.127.
- 8 Dymond, 1948; p.229.
- 9 *ibid.* p.228/9.
- 10 *ibid.* p.232.
- 11 *ibid.* p.232.
- 12 *ibid.* p.233.
- 13 Dymond, 1950; p.343.
- 14 Dymond, 1948; p.228.
- 15 Harré, 1981. In chapters 2, 3, and 4 he explores the relationship between persons and selves and lays the foundations for an explanation of personal identity which, he argues, has two aspects: the *factual* personal identity of the person, an empirical, socially derived entity, and the *sense* of personal identity of the self, a hypothetical construct invented to account for the felt continuity of our own individual biography, the sense of being at the centre of our own world, the feeling of being the source of our own actions. See also notes 6, 9, and 10 to chapter 1 above.
- 16 Dymond, 1950; p.346.
- 17 *ibid.* p.343.
- 18 cited by Dymond, 1949; p.127.

- 19 Watson, 1938.
- 20 Hogan, 1969, 1975; Grief and Hogan, 1973.
- 21 Hogan, 1969; p.307.
- 22 Grief and Hogan, 1973; p.280.
- 23 ibid. p.280.
- 24 ibid. p.281.
- 25 ibid. p.282.
- 26 Cartwright and Lerner, 1963.
- 27 see section 3.42.
- 28 op. cit. p.240.
- 29 Hogan, 1969; p.313.
- 30 ibid. p.307.
- 31 ibid. p.315.
- 32 Grief and Hogan, 1973.
- 33 Hogan, 1975; p.15.
- 34 ibid. p.15.
- 35 ibid, p.16.
- 36 ibid. p.16.
- 37 Trait refers to a (hypothesised) personality characteristic which persists over time and situations. The real life manifestations by an individual over a long period of time and in many different contexts of a particular mode of coping with or responding to the world could perhaps justify the attribution to that individual of a personality trait. The trait name is assumed to label uniquely the specific mode of coping or responding and to typify that particular person. Paper and pencil personality tests claim to short-cut the more long-winded longitudinal approach to the study of personality traits. A state on the other hand is a condition

which can be expressed or represented as a transient value of a quality or attribute which holds at a particular moment but not necessarily in general. The fact that an individual is depressed may thus be a state (perhaps brought on by news of an unfavourable result of a job interview) or a general characteristic or trait (the person is depressed much of the time though possibly of fluctuating intensity). This illustration shows that trait and state cannot be thought of as two independent dimensions of personality measurement. Though conceptually quite distinct they may in specific instances be related to one another. This poses what appear to be intractable problems for personality measurement and seems to me to undermine the modern trend in the investigation of individual differences (quite apart from other equally damaging difficulties centred on the idea of paper and pencil tests in this area of psychology).

38 Danish and Kagan, 1971; Campbell, Kagan and Krathwohl, 1971; Kagan et al., 1967.

39 Danish and Kagan, 1971; p.51.

40 Campbell, Kagan and Krathwohl, 1971; p.410.

41 *ibid.* p.411.

42 Kerr and Speroff, 1954; p.269.

43 Cronbach, 1955.

44 Gage and Cronbach, 1955; p.412.

45 Bender and Hastorf, 1950; p.556.

46 Cantril, 1949; p.370.

47 *op. cit.* p.556.

48 Taft, 1955.

49 *ibid.* p.34.

50 Bronfenbrenner, Harding and Gallwey, 1958; p.37.

- 51 See, for example, Bender and Hastorf, 1950; Bruner and Tagiuri, 1954; Taft, 1955.
- 52 Cottrell, 1950.
- 53 Argyle, 1967.
- 54 See section 3.41.
- 55 See, for example, Welford, 1968; Argyle, 1967.
- 56 Aspy and Roebuck, 1975.
- 57 Aspy, 1971.
- 58 Truax and Carkhuff, 1967.
- 59 Flanders, 1970.
- 60 Aspy and Roebuck, 1975; p.221.
- 61 Egan, 1975.
- 62 Rogers et al., 1967.
- 63 Truax and Carkhuff, 1967.
- 64 Carkhuff and Berenson, 1976; p.15.
- 65 *ibid.* p.20.
- 66 Rogers, 1957.
- 67 Rogers, 1959. Though published later than the 1957 paper it was written first.
- 68 Rogers, 1957; p.96.
- 69 *ibid.* p.96.
- 70 *ibid.* p.96.
- 71 *ibid.* p.99.
- 72 *ibid.* p.101.
- 73 Stewart, 1956, 1960. 1965. See section 3.52.

- 74 Barrett-Lennard, 1959.
- 75 Halkides, 1958.
- 76 Barrett-Lennard, 1962.
- 77 *ibid.* p.2.
- 78 *ibid.* p.2.
- 79 *ibid.* p.3.
- 80 Barrett-Lennard, 1981.
- 81 See section 1.43.
- 82 See section 1.424.
- 83 This summary is based on Barrett-Lennard, 1981; pp.94/95.
- 84 *ibid.* p.91.
- 85 Barrett-Lennard, 1962; p.3.
- 86 *ibid.* p.3.
- 87 *ibid.* p.4.
- 88 e.g. Carkhuff, 1969; Carkhuff and Berenson, 1967; Truax, 1961;
Truax and Carkhuff, 1967; Carkhuff and Berenson, 1976.
- 89 Stein, 1970; p.11.
- 90 *ibid.* p.11.
- 91 Scheler, 1954; p.9.
- 92 Stein, 1970; p.14.
- 93 See section 2.32.
- 94 Stein, 1970; p.10.
- 95 *ibid.* p.18.
- 96 It will be recalled that my approach to empathy rests on the assumption that personal knowing (the need or urge to know and understand others as persons) is the *raison d'être* of the empath-

ic relation and that therefore other ways of knowing (scientific, aesthetic, practical, etc.) may be related to empathy in some way. This is what I tried to clarify in the first part of chapter 2.

97 Stewart, 1956; p.2.

98 *ibid.* p.3.

99 *ibid.* p.20.

100 *ibid.* p.12.

101 *ibid.* pp.15/16.

102 *ibid.* p.8.

103 Freud, Standard edition, Vol. XIX; p.50n.

104 Freud, Standard edition, Vol. XVIII; p.110n.

105 Stewart, 1965; p.25.

106 *ibid.* p.25.

107 *ibid.* p.26.

108 *ibid.* p.27.

109 *ibid.* p.27.

110 *ibid.* p.27.

111 *ibid.* p.28.

112 *ibid.* p.29.

113 *ibid.* p.29.

114 *ibid.* p.29.

115 *ibid.* p.31.

116 *ibid.* p.33.

117 *ibid.* p.28.

118 *ibid.* p.36.

119 Freud, Standard edition, Vol.XVIII; pp.134/5.

120 *ibid.* p.100.

121 *ibid.* p.108.

122 Stewart, 1960.

123 Stewart, 1956; p.66.

124 *ibid.* p.66.

125 *ibid.* p.68.

126 *ibid.* p.70.

127 *ibid.* p.70.

128 Stewart, 1965.

129 *ibid.* p.215.

130 *ibid.* p.222.

131 *ibid.* p.215.

132 *ibid.* p.215.

133 *ibid.* p.216.

134 *ibid.* p.216.

135 *ibid.* p.219.

136 *ibid.* p.219.

4 A SUMMING UP

4.1 CRITERIA OF SCIENTIFIC THEORIES

How does my treatment of empathy compare with that of others reviewed in the preceding pages? I shall use Edith Stein's criteria but augmented by a test which centres on the desiderata of scientific theories in general. There are four: explicitness, objectivity, simplicity and completeness.(1)

4.11 Explicitness

Is my outline theory of empathy clear for all to see? In particular are my claims as to what is or is not the case clearly set out, unambiguously expressed with no loose ends or mysterious entities left unresolved? I have employed four presentation methods:

- (a) a reasonably clear statement of the characteristics which distinguish the empathic from other relations, a detailed exposition of the terms appearing in my set of propositions, and a careful analysis of the processes which, I suggest, are involved;
- (b) an analysis of the various kinds of empathic relation (both genuine and mistaken) together with a detailed analysis of my terms and hypothesised processes;
- (c) an account of the sufficient and necessary conditions for empathy;
- (d) a comparison between empathy and (i) some other interpersonal relations, and (ii) some other emotional bonds, with distinctions and reasons for making them clearly made.

Each contribution to the argument either adds something new or reinforces in a particularly dramatic way features that have already been sketched in.

Naturally I am not claiming that every term is clearly defined (e.g. I have only touched in lightly the difference between person and self) or that every process is unambiguously described. Doubtless, too, stylistic imperfections will mar the effect which I am striving for. Nevertheless I maintain that my outline probably merits 7 out of 10 on an imaginary scale of explicitness.

4.12 Objectivity

Apart from occasional references to the literature from time to time and a number of apposite and illustrative anecdotes there is not

much that qualifies as objective support (as understood in orthodox scientific communities) for my theory. If objectivity is represented by the over-against relation in which the observer deliberately tries to separate himself from that which he is observing then it must be admitted that my account lacks objectivity. If on the other hand we accept that objectivity, if it is to have any meaning at all, must be construed as a condition of being in and with one's own experience; if we argue, that is to say, that the observer and the observed are one, and that the observer grasps both his unity with and separateness from the world, then, I maintain, the essential nature of objectivity is preserved.

This is not the place to comment on the nature of the scientific attitude but it is clear to me that a genuine scientific enterprise has no need of the myth of objectivity since such a condition as understood in orthodox science is impossible. The best way to approach this state is to embrace the world in the empathic or the quasi-empathic relation, to approach it from the stance of non-manipulative openness in which the observer may grasp its givenness as it is at that moment. This state cannot be willed but can be prepared for as I have suggested in earlier pages.

On a scale of objectivity I award myself 6 marks out of 10 which might be somewhat on the mean side. Others may accuse me of manic optimism.

4.13 Simplicity

In order to account for the complex character of empathy: its several stages, its to-ing and fro-ing nature, human fallibility, the fact that people may not go through all stages, and so on, the dynamic quality of empathy must be represented in any truthful description. I believe that my outline theory is both simple and consistent with the richness of the phenomena as encountered in the real world. There must always be a trade-off between the complexity of the phenomena and the simplicity of its description as every teacher or writer of text-books quickly discovers. One cannot tell the whole truth (assuming that "whole truth" is a useful concept) all at once since in order to explicate one idea other as yet unexplained ideas are

sometimes essential. However, within the constraints of one's skill in organising material, maintaining a balance between the explained and the as yet unexplained and in retaining a firm conceptual grip on the subject under discussion, it is possible to present to a reader a unified, readily grasped description of quite complex phenomena. I think my own theory stands up reasonably well to this critical test and I rate myself on my imaginary simplicity scale 7 out of 10.

4.14 Completeness

It would be a bold person indeed who claimed that he or she had fully explained some phenomenon and that henceforth others could seek fresh pastures to explore there being nothing more to do in this one.

I have several times linked my investigation to the larger one of securing a proper foundation for a scientific psychology which seeks to know and understand persons, a psychology of personal being. In this larger context there are many questions which I have not considered; doubtless there are many I have not even imagined. There are some to which I have made brief reference here and there. The point is that from the perspective of this larger enquiry empathy as a phenomenon looks quite different. This is what Stewart may have meant when he wrote that "a basic psychology of personal knowing in its highest form, the act of empathy, is what we have to develop..."

(2) A study of empathy is or can become a study of the epistemological foundations of psychology. Since I deliberately chose to ignore these wider implications I clearly have not presented a complete account of empathy. Within the narrow, self-imposed viewpoint which I have adopted, however, I have striven to give as complete and accurate a description of empathy as lies within my power. I am obviously a victim of my own limitations as a thinker, a theorist, a knower of the world and its ways.

Finally I have already admitted to a shortage of "objective" data. This too must count as a mark of incompleteness. On the other hand I must agree with Leech who somewhat ruefully remarks that "...the more *explicit* formulations become, the less *data* the investigator

seems able to cover." (3) Thus one would expect an inverse relationship between explicitness and completeness, even if I did have the data to back me up. All in all I give myself 5 out of 10 on the completeness criterion.

4.15 Summary

25 out of 40 or 63% seems to me a fairly presentable score for an outline theory of anything especially in view of the problematical relationship between data and explicitness and between data and completeness. To arrive at a final opinion, however, let us return to Stein's criteria. (4) The psychological mechanisms in my theory include the stance of non-manipulative openness, the spontaneous experience of the world's givenness, love (part of which is non-manipulative openness; in company with the innate urge to grow, to know others, it leads to goodwill), deliberate identification, imitation and a shared common goal or ideal. There is a strong resemblance to Stewart's theory. Mine differs from his in that I associate non-manipulative openness with a being mode of existence; moreover I hold that non-manipulative openness is a necessary precursor to empathy where Stewart relies on transference to initiate it. We both accept the innate urge to reach out to others. Hence for me the notion of authentic independence (my equivalent of his three "losses") is anticipated in the prior requirement of non-manipulative openness.

My treatment of love (and respect, one of its elements) is more thorough than is Stewart's; also I link love to the initiating condition and to the spontaneous experience of givenness. Both of us distinguish between events and actions, things which happen and things which agents intentionally bring about. Here again I link events (relevant to empathy) to the stance of non-manipulative openness and the experience of the givenness of the world, including those experiences attendant on our acting on and in the world. Stewart does not deal with events so firmly or systematically. Of course we differ over the use of Freudian concepts. I do not use them at all. Finally I consider different types of empathic relation and different grades of empathy (to use Edith Stein's term) and extend my investigation

to include quasi-empathy (the "empathic" relation with non-human entities). Nevertheless our theoretical orientations towards empathy are very similar.

I cannot claim to have described these psychological mechanisms in any great detail from a psychological point of view. Neither do I have a theoretically secure psychological explication of the evolution of the empathic relation. There are good reasons for this shortcoming which I have already hinted at several times. These psychological considerations depend for their investigation on the availability not only of methods but also of an established body of knowledge relevant to such an investigation. A psychology of personal being has yet to be formulated; to use the current orthodoxies, whether Freudian or neo-Freudian, behaviouristic or neo-behaviouristic, cognitivist or whatever, would obfuscate rather than clarify the problems needing attention. How am I to understand the notion of non-manipulative openness, for example, or love, or the idea of authentic freedom, autonomy, independence through sharing experience with others, within any of the existing "models of humankind"? Even though my outline theory of empathy fails to meet Edith Stein's second criterion and only partially satisfies her first I nevertheless feel that within a psychology of personal being both deficiencies would be remedied. It seems to me that it is in this connection that the value of the high degree of explicitness and a high level of simplicity becomes apparent. Despite the defects, the shortcomings, the limitations due to blemishes of expression, or organisation, even of inadequate understanding, perhaps the theory as it stands provides a useful springboard for the more difficult and thoroughgoing enterprise: the delineation of a psychology of persons, of personal being, of personal knowing.

Notes to Chapter 4

1 Leech, 1974.

2 Stewart, 1956; p.2.

3 op. cit. p.70.

4 see p.235.

EPILOGUE

Where do we go from here? How might I put my ideas to the test? A number of points must be made at the outset. Suggestions that focus on operationalising the concepts described in the preceding pages have to be treated with caution. I hold that to empathise is to form an empathic relation through a process which, following Stewart and Stein and Barrett-Lennard, I conceive as a sequence of stages. Nothing is certain. Individuals may and do falter in their efforts; regression is just as common as progression especially in the early stages and among the inexperienced. One cannot operationalise persons or processes or personal problems (often the basis for trying to form an empathic relation with another as in the case of Stewart's alcoholics and drug addicts) and preserve their lived vividness. One takes people as one finds them. At best one may attempt to facilitate some kind of change which an individual wishes to bring about. Change cannot be imposed but must be sought by those desiring it. The only fit metaphor to borrow from research methods currently in use is that of action research. One approach might take the form of providing opportunities for those who wish to overcome their problems to work with facilitators who are able to enter into empathic relations with others and who are also able to help them form empathic relations among themselves. In effect this approach follows the methods Stewart used in his work, the only difference being perhaps that the implicit model is different and would therefore have to be examined and modified according to indications from the conduct and progress of the participants. The "experimenter" in such a situation acts as the facilitator. To the extent that the facilitator takes an active part in the work it is as a member of the empathic relation and not as a participant-observer. His or her involvement is part of the research and cannot be separated from it without loss of authenticity in the relations which the undertaking is designed to create, encourage and sustain. The facilitator may set up training programmes but they will be far removed from the sort of activities which are commonly encountered in orthodox social skills training. Paper and pencil tests, questionnaires, personality inventories, Dymond-type methods, and so on are irrelevant to the

tasks which face those trying to develop ability to form empathic relations with others.

The principal components of Stewart's method are fairly easy to describe. A patient is paired with one who has successfully thrown off the addiction. Of course the patient must want to change and must do. Given a positive if fragile urge to change and a recovered person who is supportive the journey towards freedom from addiction to self-limiting strategies can begin. The empathic process can get under way. The person with the problem must be free to talk or not as he or she chooses; moreover the patient's ally must not by word or gesture convey any hint of approval or disapproval but must acknowledge and accept the other as a person deserving respect and will show genuine fellow-feeling towards the other. The initiative lies always with the person with the problem. Whatever the patient says or does becomes an occasion for sharing experiences, exploring their meaning and so leading to some inkling of how each is alike yet different from the other. This stage requires patience from the supportive member and persistence from the client. There will often be failures; successes may be slight and short-lived. So long as the client rediscovers his or her urge to be free of the problem and senses the non-judgemental support of the mentor the pair will gradually create a bond of trust and so lay a foundation for the next stage, which again must arise spontaneously from the client's urge to be free. This is the stage of deliberate identification possibly preceded by imitation which I have described in chapter 1. Important throughout the empathic process is the right of both partners to exercise their freedom to choose how to act. The supportive member will always strive to earn the other's trust but the client will sometimes choose to revert to his or her self-limiting ways. Such individuals are prone to bouts of self-pity and occasionally acts of aggression against their helpers. Such choices will obviously have unfortunate consequences. These too the members will have to accept which of course does not mean condone. The path for both partners is thorny indeed but unless the supportive member can retain his or her non-manipulative, non-judgemental, open stance towards the patient and unless the latter can gradually learn to accept responsibility for his or her own conduct no progress towards autonomy and maturity

is possible. To intervene in the client's decisions is to perpetuate his or her infantile conduct by acting as a substitute parent or other "superior" adult thus depriving the client of self-respect and any hope of a genuine independence. To be free is to be free to choose and to accept in full the consequences of the choices one makes.

Stewart's methodology (which involved far more than I have briefly touched on here) combined action research with a case study approach. From his point of view his patient's self-chosen path to permanent sobriety was his criterion of success. There were no impositions of "healthy" or "civilised" or "respectable" behaviour; no offer of rewards or punishments; no exhortations or "good" advice. Backslidings and small conquests formed part of the reality which mentor and patient shared.(1)

Other kinds of personal problems may well be amenable to Stewart's methodology. Those with severe motivational problems, disabling learning difficulties, poor self-image or lack of self-confidence; people who are fearful or prone to depression; those afflicted with habits which worry them and which they would rather do without; these and many others in which persons are forced to go through life in a psychologically impoverished state might respond provided they genuinely want to be free of their handicap and are willing to work at the task.

The methodology does have its difficulties not the least of which is finding mentors who have suffered from such crippling complaints in the past but who somehow have managed to conquer it or have learned to live with it without experiencing stress. An alternative is to rely on individuals who are able to work successfully towards building empathic relations with others even though they have not endured the particular problem affecting their proteges. It is certain that most of us have had problems which we have learned to handle with varying degrees of success. Ultimately the empathic relation depends on our deepening awareness that we share a common fate: having to cope with life's many difficulties including our frequent failures. The sensitive awareness that we are all making the same journey and

experiencing similar sufferings and joys, though in different ways and to varying degrees, is what finally enables us to help one another. The fundamental "research" problem may therefore be restated as discovering how to launch a mutual self-help programme which centres on personal knowing in an atmosphere of non-manipulative, non-exploitative, non-judgemental openness. Adapting Stewart's methodology and calling on suitably modified forms of some of the procedures already used in various group therapies are worthwhile options.

As an example, consider the possibility of inviting individuals with personal problems to join a mutual self-help group. Any one group might have to be restricted to one type of problem. Members are put through a training programme which aims at developing a spirit of openness to the world especially to other people and at encouraging a non-judgemental, non-manipulative, non-exploitative approach to others. The literature on creativity is full of suggestions. The practice of an art form would also help; all art relies on intuitive perception to a high degree. Engaging seriously in one of the arts and studying the work and methods of accomplished performers will provide insights not obtainable in any other way. None of these approaches will guarantee the development of the stance of openness but with goodwill and perseverance they are more likely to be successful than not. The level and seriousness of commitment are determining factors. Members of the mutual self-help group might be asked to declare their seriousness in wanting to break free of the tyranny which their personal problem inflicts upon them. A first step might be to consider the possibility of settling for less, say learning to live with their disabilities. In the latter event the problem may remain but at least they will no longer be so incapacitated by it. In the end they may, with persistence, overcome the problem itself.

The next stage of the training programme centres on the development of mutual trust between the members of the dyads which group members form among themselves. Thereafter the programme conforms to Stewart's methodology. Such then is another type of action research project which might be initiated. This is not the place to explore

actual strategies but where the conventional experimental approach might be useful is in evaluating the various strategies employed in achieving the aims of the training programmes referred to above. Even here, however, the measurement of these variables poses serious problems. The non-manipulative, non-exploitative, non-judgemental stance and the spirit of openness may both be viewed as consistent ways of acting in and on the world. The object of study in both cases is a style of human action, a way of relating to the world. Just as I can say "Harry acted intelligently" or "Harry made an intelligent choice" so a novelist might write "Elsa embraced her son seeing in him a man in anguish rather than a killer on the run from justice. His crime distressed her yet she saw only his suffering." Elsa is expressing both aspects of goodwill. She is open to the experience of her child, here and now, a man in torment. That she deplores his crime in no way interferes with her perception of his suffering nor with her spontaneous gesture of comfort, an act of love. This dramatic incident serves to illustrate the problem of measurement in the type of research being considered here. The administration of a Barrett-Lennard type of scale to participants in order to evaluate their experiences, feelings, etc., would constitute a most unnatural intrusion into such a situation. Scenes as full of feeling, stress and love would occur very often in mutual self-help groups. Stewart provides real-life examples in his work with alcoholics.(2)

Self-report is a possible research tool. A spoken or written description of one person's experience of another can be a valuable and valued source of data though variability in expressive and perceptual skills would have to be taken into account. Neither pose insuperable difficulties. Self-reports from the members of a dyad allow comparisons to be made. Discrepancies might be resolved through discussion between the partners though some disagreements might remain intractable. These irreducible differences form essential elements of their shared reality.

Both the experimental method adopted and the instruments used must capture or attempt to capture the lived experience of the participants. Laboratory type exercises and conventional standardised pro-

cedures will not meet this need. It would be a pity to allow a narrow conception of the scientific enterprise to inhibit the use of more open-ended approaches to investigation. This is not the place to examine the nature of scientific explanation but it seems to me to be rather limiting to restrict scientific enquiry only to those problems which depend on quantification and statistical treatment before interpretation of data can begin. Other ways are valid and are in use.

I have not attempted an experimental study myself for the reason that I have already given: one must have a clear idea of the phenomenon one proposes to study before one can plan, design and implement an investigation of it, experimentally or otherwise. So many researchers into empathy have failed (a) to clarify the nature of empathy; or (b) to adopt a consistent stance towards empathy (perhaps because of their insecure grasp of the phenomenon; and finally (c) to show how their chosen method and instruments for investigating empathy are relevant to their task. Clearly the first is the critical condition.

I do not despair that a scientific study of the empathic relation is possible nor that training programmes can be designed to foster its growth. These are the next steps.

Notes to the Epilogue

1 See also Lederman, 1984.

2 Stewart, 1960.

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SUBJECTIVITY

Subjectivity has three sources. First there are the specific perceptual and motor capacities that set limits on what members of a species may experience as inputs and outputs in their commerce with the real world. How individuals of any species constitute their world is determined in part by their capacity to experience the givenness of phenomena and by their range of possible actions within that world. Humans have certain clear advantages over other species in that they can to some extent circumvent their limitations with the help of instruments, tools, machines and other products of sophisticated technologies. Even so they cannot move about freely in water like fish, nor fly like birds, nor detect magnetic fields or ultra-violet or infra-red radiation directly (so far as we know). They cannot survive very high or very low temperatures as can some viruses. The list of constraints is virtually endless. Constitutive faculties, however, are not solely genetically determined. Learning can refine the inherited potential. Peoples who lead what to western eyes are primitive lives in rain forests or deserts or permafrost conditions have developed specific perceptual and motor skills which greatly outstrip those of their apparently more accomplished fellow humans. Their eyes and ears are more sharply attuned to their environments; they are more accomplished in practical crafts of self support and show a greater range of motor performance in surviving in their usually harsher worlds than their more civilized brethren. They also seem closer to their world than we to ours, a point Scheler was fond of emphasising. Primitive living seems to be much more first-hand, direct, involved, committed than ours which tends to be second-hand, either because we intellectualise it through vicariously experiencing it in film or television programmes or reading; or because we prefer analysis to intuitive knowledge based on actual, i.e. lived, experience. I am not of course suggesting that we should or could return to a primitive mode of existence any more than Scheler did but we might attempt to recover some of the primitive's skills which we have lost. High on the list would be the spirit of openness and a non-manipulative approach to the world as I have sug-

gested in earlier pages. If some of the limitations of our perceptual and motor capacities are culturally determined (as they surely are) then we must strive to understand and overcome them.

The second aspect of subjectivity centres on the notion of intentionality. In part this term refers to the logical necessity for psychological functions, e.g. feeling, thinking, perceiving, fearing, imagining, hoping, and so on to have an object. We must think about, fear, imagine, perceive something. There is no meaning to the words otherwise. We do not, so to speak, have a state of perception waiting to be filled with content, the objects of perception. The perceiving and the perceived are but two inseparable aspects of a single perceptual act. Intensionality is thus not only a logical relation between certain kinds of mental life and the phenomenal world to which they relate; it is also an expression of the unity of the inner and outer worlds of experience which characterise psychical life. It combines the separate ideas of directedness, consciousness and the unity of experience into a single term. We are conscious of something in a specific way and in a specific context. We see a friend approaching us; we are fearful of the menacing posture of the neighbour's dog; we day-dream about the the holiday we have planned for later in the year. In all these cases and in many more that we can easily conjure up we are conscious of the specific experiences to the extent that we actually do see, fear, and phantasise about the specific phenomenal objects named. There is not something called consciousness seeking content to fill its emptiness. It is true that throughout this dissertation I have used expressions such as "in passive consciousness" as though I had just such a meaning in mind. This is certainly not the case as my examples and my discussion of them has surely demonstrated. We must, however, notice and preserve the distinction between the experience of perceiving, fearing, day-dreaming and the experience of the phenomenal objects lying at the heart of these psychological functions. Experiences, unlike sensations, are not physical but mental events. Intensionality is a property of mental life. It was thus that Brentano distinguished physical from psychical phenomena. Intensionality plays no part in the former.

Intensionality is the phenomenological analogue of the Cartesian *cogito*. Descartes gave pride of place to thinking and reason in his construal of the relation between human beings and their knowledge of the world although there is implicit in his use of the term *cogito* all psychic experience, not just thinking. Nevertheless he gave preeminence to analysis and reason (i.e. ideal world phenomena) rather than to the intuitive grasping of the givenness of experienced, lived, real world phenomena.

The third element of subjectivity is meaning and significance. If we assume that a real world does exist independently of our own conscious experience of it, that it is accessible directly (through the experience of its givenness in passive consciousness as I have tried to show) we can construe our grasping or apprehension of it as the experience of non-attributive distinctions since we nevertheless accept the constraints of our human perceptual (and motor) capabilities which necessarily implies distinctions such as figure-ground, light and dark, moving and static, and so forth. The experience of the givenness of the world in passive consciousness is non-attributive just because it is an experience in passive consciousness. It is in this experience that we can transcend, never completely but to some degree, our historical nature, our personal biography and all its cultural trappings. The difficulty is, perhaps for the reasons Scheler suggested (that we are dominated by intellectualism, rationalism, a preference for analytical thought), that the experience of givenness is typically very short-lived and that the directness, the transcendental quality of the givenness is swamped by recollections, associations, thought habits, and the like which the event precipitating the experience brings to consciousness (or possibly stirs below consciousness). As I have tried to show the experience of givenness cannot be willed or striven for. Either it happens or it does not; the best we can do is to try and cultivate the non-manipulative stance of openness towards the real world.

It is through the concept of subjectivity that I think the hermeneutical and the phenomenological approaches to psychology find common ground. Despite their very different starting points, in the

domain of subjectivity they meet and use a similar language. It is here too that we become aware of differences.

One modern phenomenological movement is trying to establish a genuine scientific psychology rooted in biology; since the person exists in the real world as a living agent the lived body is the centre of experience. Hence the significance of experience to the person derives not only from his or her livingness but also from the fact that the agent is an embodied one. The lived body is quite different from the empirical one; the inner experience of facing the world intensionally (and intentionally) is not the same as that felt in the over-against relation between observer and observed when they are both combined in a single self. Phenomenologically speaking, the lived body may be a different object of consciousness than the person. If the focus of a particular observer's interest is, say, an organism, i.e. a biological mechanism coping with its environment, then concern with the inner world of the experiencing organism gives way to an over-against relation between the observer and the observed. On the other hand if the main interest centres on a person then the other's livingness must be approached through experiencing his or her givenness as a person, i.e. through the other's expressiveness which can only be conveyed through his or her body which of necessity includes its livingness. The lived body is not an object of study for biologists doing biology unless biology (or at least human biology) is so transformed that the name seems scarcely appropriate. The living body in contrast is very much in the purview of biology.

If these modern phenomenologists seem not to have resolved the relationship between various ways of construing human beings and hence have not really settled the issue concerning the proper methods to use in their investigations, the hermeneutical psychologists seem to have forgotten that persons also inhabit their lived bodies.

Intentions certainly typify persons and agents (since, as Gauld and Shotter(1) point out, intentions are intentions to act and so the notion of intentions in the absence of actions, at least *in potentia*, are as meaningless as actions without intentions) but persons are embodied and part of their subjectivity is in their embodied-

ness as I have tried to show above. Thus it seems to me hermeneutics and phenomenology might with mutual benefit join forces in an exploration of subjectivity and from this common meeting place map out a psychology more in keeping with a human being construed now from a shared point of view which recognises that not only are there several ways of construing human beings but also that we have yet to explain how these different construals are related.

Notes to Appendix 1

1 Gauld and Shotter, 1977.

PHENOMENOLOGY

Here I am only concerned with showing how phenomenology contributes to my account of empathy. Many issues arise which cannot be explored in this brief note. Although phenomenology as a philosophical system has acquired (since Brentano) a unique cachet which clearly distinguishes it, both in content and method, from earlier systems it is misleading to write of the phenomenological approach as though there were a consensus as to the nature of phenomenology and how it conducts its business. We need to qualify our reference, perhaps by citing Husserl or Scheler or Merleau-Ponty or Schutz or the *Dusquesne* school of existentialist phenomenologists(1) or the modern biologically-based movement centred on the work of some western European researchers which has flourished over the last 20 years. Thines gives a good account of their work and orientation.

For Husserl phenomenology was concerned with discovering the essential nature of real world phenomena as a first step towards building a scientific philosophy. Striving for essence is a two stage process. The first step is to unmask the kind of reality which characterises a particular phenomenon. What kind of thing are we dealing with and what are the appropriate methods for investigating it? The second stage centres on the experience of the knower: how (i.e. by what acts of consciousness) does an individual constitute the phenomenon? In seeking answers to both types of question Husserl felt that we must somehow bypass our existing knowledge; the phenomenon, he said, must be allowed to speak for itself if we are to grasp its real nature, its essence. This process of temporarily laying aside our knowledge is known as reduction. The first stage in Husserl's phenomenological method is called the eidetic reduction because the essential point of view or perspective or form of reality (*eidos*) is revealed by it. This is an intuitive process and cannot be brought about by a volitional effort; somehow we grasp the givenness of the phenomenon. Thus, in Husserlian terms, I construe empathy as a relation between persons; this is the kind of reality to which the phenomenon of empathy belongs. The world of relations includes other

phenomena than empathy and the relations may hold between other than persons. Moreover, since emotional bonds are relations (though the reverse is not necessarily true) a study of empathy invites a study of emotional bonds. Hence the study of empathy focusses on persons and significant non-persons (e.g, biological mechanisms, organisms, and psychophysical individuals), and on relations and emotional bonds. This content also suggests the methods for investigating empathy by, in effect, pointing to questions such as: how do we investigate persons, relations, emotional bonds? How do persons differ from non-persons? What properties do empathic relations have that other relations lack? And so on.

The second step is the transcendental reduction in which the main problem is to discover how an individual comes to know the world. The individual here is not seen as an empirical subject but as an active agent constituting the world through his or her own experience with specific phenomena and within specific contexts of meaning and action. In my discussion of empathy the corresponding elements at this stage centre on personal and other ways of knowing. This led to a consideration of the non-manipulative stance of openness, goodwill, the spontaneous experience of givenness (in passive consciousness, in which similarities with others are grasped but in which the first intimations of differences are also apprehended), the process of deliberate identification and the eventual engagement of the participants in joint action in pursuit of a shared common goal or ideal. These are the acts of consciousness by means of which individuals get to know and understand each other as persons (i.e. grasp or constitute each other's subjectivity and thus their mutual intersubjectivity) and in so doing create and regenerate the empathic relation.

I did not, as a matter of fact, proceed along these Husserlian lines in setting about my own study of empathy any more than I followed Scheler whose phenomenology is quite different. For Scheler it is characteristic for all living things to strive, to drive towards realization of being, to become whatever is in their nature to become. The urge to strive, however, meets with resistance from the real world. It is in this way that sentient living creatures experi-

ence the givenness of the world; givenness of real world phenomena is thus a function of the living entity's striving and its experience of resistance from the world so generated. This for Scheler is what being-in-the-world means. It is how he arrives at the notion of the individual's constitution of reality, of subjectivity. Moreover this apprehension of the real world is prior to perception of the things giving rise to the experience. For Scheler, like Husserl, the process of getting to the heart of the phenomenon under study is intuitive; the resistance of the world is, so to speak, suspended in order to allow the phenomenon to reveal its nature, to show its pure essence. Scheler's phenomenology lays to one side any attempt to seek analytical knowledge (i.e. to apply reason to the study of the phenomenon). His study of sympathy and the subtle distinctions he makes in separating sympathy from feelings that look similar and are often confused with it is a brilliant example of his method. So is his study of love and 'ressentiment'. Although I have certainly borrowed Scheler's notions of striving and resistance and could as easily show how I might have used his technique there would be little point in doing so since that is not how I proceeded.

The third group which I shall briefly comment on because they are relevant to this dissertation is represented by Thines; they seek a phenomenological psychology rooted in biology. Thines agrees with much of Husserl's phenomenology but places more emphasis on the cultural character of the human natural world than did Husserl. This is important in a comparative psychology. If animals are to be understood in ways similar to the human case, e.g. in explicating the notion of their consciousness of their natural worlds, we need to appreciate the full significance of the fact that animals are embodied entities; their livingness resides in, and is mediated by, their bodies whatever other processes might be at work, just as with humans. Thines asserts that the starting point of a genuine phenomenological psychology must be

sought in the direct study of the living organism in his adaptive relations with his world. This last sentence should, however, be understood in a sense which differs profoundly from well-known existentially implied definitions of the subject as 'being-in-the-world' (2)

Though he agrees that this notion is still hard to find in modern psychology it is also undefined. Predictably for Thines the specification of 'being-in-the-world' in order that it conform to his notion of organism must draw on some of the recent trends in the life sciences especially in the work of some ethologists.

Insofar as ethology defines itself as the biology of behaviour, it would be illogical to dissociate its rejection of mechanistic Behaviourism from phenomenological attempts at grasping the significant relations of the organism to its specific natural world (Umwelt) (3) (This whole passage is set in italics).

It is obvious that Thines' construal of organism differs from mine. For him subjectivity is an essential feature of the concept organism but this poses problems for me in interpreting the notion of being-in-the-world. Ethologists and students of the mechanisms of animal behaviour such as Tinbergen, von Frisch, Lorenz, Eibl-Eibesfeldt and Buytendijk have helped to clarify this idea but my difficulty is reconciling the notion of subjectivity (which belongs to the domain of the personal or its non-human equivalent) and the idea of organism (which does not).

The forgoing comments partly explain why phenomenology plays, directly or indirectly, such a large part in my account of empathy. One might ask, even if a case can be made for letting things speak for themselves, whether it follows that phenomenology in one or other of its forms offers the only route for investigating the nature of empathy. One might carry out a conceptual analysis teasing out, for example, the derivation of the concept from other concepts thus arriving at a conceptual map of the territory labelled empathy. Or one might attempt a linguistic analysis by observing how different people use the word "empathy" and exploring the meanings they attribute to it either explicitly or implicitly. One thing is quite clear. Empirical studies are quite inappropriate for, as Stein somewhat caustically remarked of psychogenetic theories of empathy current in her day: "Before one can delineate the genesis of something, one must know what it is". (4) Similarly before one can investigate something empirically one must clarify it sufficiently to know what sort of questions it makes sense to ask and to specify suitable methods for attempting to answer them.

Whilst both conceptual and linguistic analyses are useful tools and have their place in studies such as this one they cannot help us get directly to the phenomenon itself. Language reflects the cultural tradition of its user so that at best this type of analysis can only define some characteristics of a particular culture or sub-culture involving the concept labelled by the word under study. Though this can be extremely interesting and informative it does not itself reveal the phenomenon which, so to speak, lies behind the language used to express it. Because concepts are conveyed by language conceptual analysis becomes a form of linguistic analysis in which relations between and among concepts are sought rather than usage and meaning *per se*. The conceptual network reveals an aspect of meaning which goes beyond the cultural tradition reflected in the linguistic use of the major terms being investigated. Logical relations represent the most important part of conceptual analysis which therefore leads to the explication of a knowledge domain centred on the major term.

Notes to Appendix 2

1 A sample of this viewpoint is to be found in Valle and King, 1978.

2 Thines, 1977; p.108.

3 *ibid.* p.145.

4 Stein, 1970; p.26.

Appendix 3

S Natale's "An Experiment in Empathy"

Natale's research, published by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 1972, demonstrates some of the difficulties in evaluating empathy research. I originally came across this work while investigating critical thinking. At that time I had no special interest in empathy and knew very little about the studies which had been carried out, mainly in America.

Natale accepts Rogers' definition of empathy: "the ability to sense the client's private world as if it were your own but without ever losing the "as if" quality". From my own view of empathy (i.e. the empathic process) I can agree that Rogers has pointed to one possible outcome of achieving an empathic relation with someone. Are we born with this quality? If not, how do we acquire it? If learned, does it come all at once as is sometimes hypothesised in one-trial learning studies? As I try to show in my review of Rogers' contribution to our understanding of empathy he appears to envisage a process at work though he is far from clear in his writings about its nature. Some of his students, however, settled for treating empathy as an ability and held that, as with other abilities, people possess it in measurable quantities. All assert that empathy can be learned. Truax, Carkhuff, Natale, Berenson and many others in this tradition accept without question that empathy is what Rogers said it was; they see their job as finding ways of measuring it, nurturing it with appropriate sensitivity training programmes and subsequently reassessing it.

Empathy presents Natale with his first problem: the choice of instruments. He found four ready-made ones:

- 1 for predicting others' responses: a test similar to that used by Dymond;
- 2 for studying the other's responses to the "empathiser": the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory;
- 3 for studying empathy in process:
 - (a) the Truax Accurate Empathy Scale; and
 - (b) the Kerr and Speroff Empathy test.

Natale offers no critique of any of these procedures although at least two of them are suspect (the Dymond test and the Kerr and Speroff Empathy test), and a third, the Truax Accurate Empathy Scale, has some very odd features considering the importance of empathy for the helping relation claimed by Carkhuff, Truax, Natale and like-minded fellow workers.

The Kerr and Speroff Test is perhaps the most remarkable of the four. It consists of three parts. Subjects are asked to rank order 14 types of music according to the assumed listening preferences of either a factory worker or an office worker. Next they are asked to rank 15 different types of (American) magazine in order of the preferences of an average American. Finally, they have to put a list of 10 annoying experiences in the order in which they imagine an average 25-39 year-old would rank them. Natale does not explain how his subjects were able to put themselves "in the other person's position, establish rapport, and anticipate his reactions, feelings and behaviours" when the other person is a fictional character, or rather several fictional characters, entirely of the subject's own invention. It is all the more surprising, therefore, that he wrote: "This test...is the only standardized test available to measure empathy...The test assumes that individuals who are more empathic are superior in understanding and anticipating the reactions of others."(1) Perhaps the Empathy Test has potential for predicting the likely success of budding writers of fiction. Natale uses it to measure what he calls predictive empathy of the generalized other. I have commented on this logically and conceptually dubious concept elsewhere.(2)

One form of the Truax Accurate Empathy Scale consists of short films of "psychotherapeutic interviews based on real transcripts but played by professional actors."(3) Additionally, subjects are given some excerpts from fiction. In both cases the subject has to write down his or her helping response (Natale's sample included only 1 woman) to the situation featured in the stimulus material. The responses are rated on a 9-point scale of empathy by trained judges. The scale ranges from "seems completely unaware of even the most conspicuous of the client's statements" to "an unerring response to the client's

full range of feelings in their exact intensity". As with the Kerr and Speroff test subjects have no direct contact with actual people and in the case of the film excerpts they do not see the persons needing help but instead the actors playing their parts. Apart from Truax's incredible choice of the epithet "accurate" to describe this scale Natale, even more unbelievably, uses it to measure what he calls interactive empathy. Perhaps this scale could be used to predict the likely success of budding actors. I find it extraordinary that such a procedure is so widely accepted and used as a valid detector of accurate empathy, or of any other kind for that matter.

The relationship between these two tests and the measurement of empathy in process is not explained. Natale apparently did not feel the need to expand this aspect of his research which, considering its theoretical importance for the claim he makes, is surprising.

The Dymond Test of Predictive Empathy is potentially much more interesting and worth serious study despite its serious flaws which attracted much criticism in the mid-50s. The procedure involves selecting a small sub-set of 50 items from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) which is then used by two people to rate both themselves and each other and also to imagine how each rates both self and the other. Thus the pattern of ratings of two individuals, A and B, is shown in the table overleaf.

The second and last columns refer to the four tasks for A and B respectively listed in the first part. Level 1 summarises the two sets of direct judgements, for example, A's rating of self, A(A), and of other, A(B), and similarly B's rating of self, B(B), and of other, B(A). Level 2 represents A's and B's attempts to imagine how the other rates both self and the other. Thus A(B(B)) stands for A's guess about B's self-rating, B(B); and B(A(B)) represents B's guess about A's judgement of self, A(B). The judgements in all cases refer to one item from the shortened version of the MMPI which Dymond used for deriving her measure of empathy. This procedure is repeated 50 times to cover the whole sub-set.

For A: (A1) A rates self
 (A2) A rates B
 (A3) A records how B will rate self (B)
 (A4) A records how B will rate A

For B: (B1) B rates self
 (B2) B rates A
 (B3) B records how A will rate self (A)
 (B4) B records how A will rate B

There are two significant omissions in Dymond's procedure. The first concerns the nature of the task which each individual is performing: rating an individual on an MMPI item. Dymond assumes that everyone will construe each item in the same way. This may be true but cannot be assumed. Each person is making a judgement (or rather 50 judgements) within the context of his or her own world. We might represent these tasks in a rather more informative manner:

	A's world		B's world	
Level 1 own direct judgements	(A1)	A(A)	B(B)	(B1)
	(A2)	A(B)	B(A)	(B2)
Level 2 Guesses about other's judgements	(A3)	A(B(B))	B(A(A))	(B3)
	(A4)	A(B(A))	B(A(B))	(B4)

Everyone attaches meaning to a statement according to personal knowledge, belief, feelings at the time, and many other factors. Test design procedures aim to minimise variability in personal interpretations of items but nevertheless cannot guarantee unanimity of agreement about what a particular item means on a specific occasion of use. Judgements are made in private so uncertainty always exists on this point. Thus the above table ought to be rewritten with the task represented in a way which stresses the rater's viewpoint, perhaps by placing /Ia or /Ib after each entry on A's and B's side respectively. For example, A(A)/Ia and B(B)/Ib refer to A's and B's judgements of themselves on an item interpreted by each of them uniquely (which, of course, might be identically).

The second omission concerns the need for a third level: A's and B's guesses about level 2.(4) For example, "How, in A's opinion, does B think A has rated B?" Here A is guessing about how B imagines that A has rated self, i.e. B. This can be represented by A(B(A(B)))/Ia. Note that although B(A(B)) comes from B's side of

level 2, Ia is used to represent the item because A is operating in his or her own world. The reason for the third level emerges from a consideration of the comparisons which can be made using this new table. Let us start with A's self-rating, A(A)/Ia. B's "best guess" for this is given by B(A(A))/Ib. Once again note that B's guess is expressed in terms of B's understanding of the item, Ib. Finally A's "best guess" about B's "best guess" is given by A(B(A(A)))/Ia. Hence one person's judgements at each of two levels, 1 and 2, are matched by corresponding guesses by the other which are recorded at levels 2 and 3.

As an illustration two comparisons are shown by dotted lines in a new table below. They represent:

- (1) A's self-rating at level 1 and B's guess or prediction about it at level 2;
- (2) B's prediction about A's self-rating at level 2 and A's guess about this prediction at level 3.

Beyond level 3 the task becomes meaningless for most people. In any event no new information is likely to be revealed even if the task were possible.

		A's world		B's world	
Level 1 Direct judgement	(A1)	A(A)/Ia		B(B)/Ib	(B1)
	(A2)	A(B)/Ia		B(A)/Ib	(B2)
Level 2 Guess about level 1	(A3)	A(B(B))/Ia		B(A(A))/Ib	(B3)
	(A4)	A(B(A))/Ia		B(A(B))/Ib	(B4)
Level 3 Guess about level 2	(A5)	A(B(A(A)))/Ia		B(A(B(B)))/Ib	(B5)
	(A6)	A(B(A(B)))/Ia		B(A(B(A)))/Ib	(B6)

From the point of view of empathy research, agreements between corresponding points on A's and B's side at the various levels provide a measure of similarity between A and B. However, this must assume that Ia and Ib are practically the same and as I have pointed out this can never be determined with certainty. On the other hand if A and B could discuss Ia and Ib and explore their own meanings and understandings and ultimately perhaps come to an agreement such that Ia and Ib were seen as equivalent alternatives, more or less, (always provided that A and B discuss their differences non-manipulat-

ively, non-judgementally, non-exploitatively, from a stance of openness towards one another) then we might be able to use a Dymond-type instrument, suitably augmented to include level 3, for evaluating an interpersonal relation in order to determine the extent of its empathic character. Another proviso would be essential, however, and that is that participants be allowed to make conditional agreements. No one is always decisive, bad-tempered, etc. It often depends...Neither can it be true, for example, that a person is usually bad-tempered, etc. and for the same reason. Perhaps some topics, situations, people make a particular individual bad-tempered except when he has had a few drinks. Then he is benign to everyone. On the other hand with old ladies, small children and dogs he is patience personified but if his wife turns up his behaviour becomes quite different. Life as experienced by most of us most of the time is variegated, a patchwork of moods, feelings, habits and so forth, which change subtly, sometimes dramatically, according to all manner of triggers which precipitate the change. Our experiences cannot be reduced to the bipolar dimensionality or the simple category systems so beloved by psychometrists.

Natale is apparently unaware of these difficulties. Neither does he show any sign of having read the critiques which question the rationale of assumed similarity scores as a measure of empathy though he cites some of them in his bibliography.(5)

One of the most serious difficulties with Natale's research is highlighted in one of his conclusions. He claims, through analysis of the differences between mean scores of his experimental and control groups, that training in critical thinking increases empathic ability. Wilson in his preface to the book observes:

Some may feel that more attention should also be paid to the possibility of some logical overlap between "empathy" and "critical thinking". For if we gave a full expansion of what was meant by "thinking critically about people", might this not include the notion of learning to see their worlds as they see them? Is this not what the historian and literary critic does (sic), for instance? So that it would not be at all surprising if those who improve their "critical thinking" also improved their "empathy"; or rather, it would be logically absurd to suggest that they could not improve it.(6)

We might gloss Wilson's remarks thus: if critical thinking about people and empathy are construed as elements of the same cognitive

domain such that the first includes the second then improvement in the first logically entails at least some improvement in the second. Natale's account of both elements seems to me to support the first part of this proposition; I feel that Wilson thinks so too.

Notes to Appendix 3

- 1 Natale, 1972; p.48.
- 2 See section 1.54.
- 3 Natale, 1976; p.50.
- 4 Laing, Phillipson and Lee, 1966, extended Dymond's method to include this third level.
- 5 He lists Cronbach, 1955; Bender and Hastorf, 1950; Hastorf and Bender, 1952; Gage and Cronbach, 1955. None, however are referred to in the text.
- 6 Natale, 1976; p.11.